

COLONEL HUNGERFORD'S
DAUGHTER
STORY OF AN AMERICAN GIRL

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STORY OF AN AMERICAN GIRL

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COLONEL HUNGERFORD'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE MORNING SIDE SCHOOL.

COLONEL HUNGERFORD had lived for years on a farm in the Soldiers' Belt, a name used to designate a wide tract of rich land upon which ex-soldiers had located their patents from the government. The house stood upon the principal highway leading to the county seat three miles away. A half-mile to the east was the district schoolhouse, called the Morning Side school because the building stood upon one of the few hills in the region and caught the first rays of morning light. The ample yard was well shaded with box-elders, and in a neighborhood pasture was a ball ground where many a hot struggle was suddenly terminated by the ringing of the "Master's" bell. In front was a pretty grove where Sunday-school picnics were held, and a farmers' alliance had an occasional rally. There was nothing pretentious about the white schoolhouse with its green blinds, but the school had a wide reputation for its spelling matches and debating club. The teachers who came and

went with fall and spring were accustomed to say that no school in all the region had such smart scholars. The Clingmans, Hungerfords, Norwins and Culverwells furnished a succession of boys and girls who could spell down any school in the county; and when little Jack Clingman joined the debating club, and made his first speech, the old farmers patted him on the back and said that he would be a match for the "Little Giant" some day. Elwood Hungerford made no effort to keep up with Jack Clingman in discussing the state of the Union and other big subjects which were disposed of by the Morning Side debaters. But in their classes they were always rivals, as they were also on the ball ground at noon. But for all that, they were great friends, and when the winter school was over, they were often seen mounted on fine colts galloping down the road together.

Lindell Norwin was three years younger and a great admirer of Jack and Elwood, in spite of the fact that they refused to take him into their company. They had picked up enough of city vernacular to declare that they did not want a kid in their set. But Lindell was a great favorite with his teachers, who often flattered him with the remark that intellectually he was a head taller than any boy of his age they ever knew, and he thought that this ought to count for something with the bigger boys.

But Lindell's father was poor, and the Hungersheds and Clingmans had a whole section each in their farms, some fine coal lands, and horses and cattle in droves; and their family connections were influential and aristocratic. Lindell's mother said that he was left out by the other boys because he did not have a fine horse to ride. Whether this was true or not, it was Mrs. Norwin's way of explaining pretty nearly everything that went amiss with the Norwin family. For Mr. Norwin was one of those learned farmers who was always long on knowledge and short on crops. He knew more about geological formations and soils and got less out of his own soil than any other man in the county. He would have made a typical amateur farmer if he had been a member of some other profession, that is, a man who is not kept by his farm, but his farm is kept by him. He was always "reading up" when the other farmers were up and at it, and as a result his fields were never up with the procession of the seasons, and his crops were poor and his horses and cattle lean.

Mrs. Norwin hoped that her husband would awake some day, but when this began to seem impossible, her heart and hope turned strongly toward her boy as the only expectation of the family; and as her eagerness for his future success intensified she became the more sensitive to all the

chill winds which blew across his path. Besides, she had finished her school days in the same academy in the East with Mrs. Hungerford and Mrs. Clingman, and had gone out into life with as great ambition for the future as the ambitious and handsome girls who had admired her as a brilliant student and loved her as a friend. That they all had found themselves neighbors again after marriage, in a western community, was simply taken as one of those things which happen in life, without other attempt at explanation. But somehow there began to float in Mrs. Norwin's mind a misty conception of a future fate in which their children were to cross one another's paths, and what if this was but the schoolboy beginning of a reality over which the years would drop light or somber shadows? She looked at the two happy young boys as they galloped past the door, glanced at Lindell's disappointed face, sighed and said in her heart, "Will they always ride and Lindell stand and see them go by?"

THE CALL TO ARMS.

When the War of the Rebellion broke out the Soldiers' Belt was stirred by the call to arms. A flag was flung to the breeze from the Morning Side schoolhouse, and the farmers and their sons gathered at the tap of the drum, heard the appeals of

common men suddenly turned into eloquent orators, and at once enrolled themselves in a company. In the election of officers Mr. Hungerford was made captain of the company by a small majority over Tom Culverwell, whose dashing ways made him a special favorite with the young men. Captain Clingman, who was Tom's uncle, and who had got his own title as commander of a militia company, was keenly disappointed, but it was no part of his philosophy to mourn over the past, and he was a man of many expedients, a manipulator, to be plain about it. Hence when the time came for organizing the regiment at Millersburg, the county seat, Captain Clingman had a combination formed which made Captain Hungerford a major and helped Tom Culverwell up to the first lieutenancy.

During the bloody and disastrous battles in Virginia the colonel of the regiment was killed and the lieutenant-colonel so severely wounded that he was not able to return to his command, and resigned. It was while the regiment was on its way to Gettysburg that Major Hungerford was commissioned colonel. The loss of the regiment in that great battle was heavy, and in one of the fiercest struggles Colonel Hungerford's life was saved only by the daring of Lieutenant Culverwell, who dashed into the face of a Confederate cavalry-

man just as the latter was aiming a deadly blow with his saber at the head of the commander of the regiment. The shock threw both men from their horses and Culverwell was taken prisoner, but escaped during the last day of the battle, and made his way back to the regiment looking very much as if he had been run over by a whole corps of the Confederate army. After this there was nothing which Colonel Hungerford would not do for Tom Culverwell, and when the regiment was disbanded he promised his brave comrade and neighbor his life-long fidelity.

But the war brought to the Hungerfords a great sorrow as well as real honor. Jack Clingman and Elwood Hungerford were in their teens when they saw their fathers ride away to the front, and it was only by the sternest parental authority that they were kept at home. But after a year of fretting and planning they slipped away and joined a regiment which was sent to the army in Tennessee. Two years later Lindell Norwin appeared in camp and begged to be enrolled in the company with his old schoolmates. The captain had once been a teacher of the Morning Side school, and when Lindell presented him a letter from his mother, he smiled and replied: "If you have as much ambition as your mother has for you, you will make a good soldier in spite of your youth. She seems to be

afraid that your neighbors' boys will get ahead of you."

At the battle of Franklin the company was at the outpost against which the enemy hurled its first fierce and desperate assault, and Elwood Hungerford was mortally wounded. His schoolmates caught him up in their arms and took him to the rear. Lindell was ordered by the commanding officer to take care of him, while Jack hurried back to the front. Deep into the night Lindell watched over the flickering life, striving in vain to staunch the bleeding wound and praying every moment for the coming of a surgeon. But none came, and the pallor on the face of his fallen comrade told him that death was at hand. There was a struggle and an attempt to rally, and then a faint whisper; and bending over, he heard the dying soldier say:

"Take me in your arms, and be home, father and mother to me. For I shall never see my home again; never go up the old walk as I have dreamed for the past two years that I should do some day; never look into their faces again. It is hard—but it is for my country and I am a soldier. When you reach home go to my mother and tell her that I died speaking her name, and kiss little Helen for me, and tell father that I fell where the fight was fiercest, at the very front edge of the battle."

And then there was a fainter whisper, "Mother, dear mother," and whatever visions Elwood Hungerford had seen as he came and went to the little schoolhouse on the hill were at an end, but his name was on the roll of the world's dead heroes.

The next day after the battle Jack was made a lieutenant in the fragment of the company which came out of the bloody struggle, for his conspicuous courage, and Lindell was detailed for service at headquarters. "That is a likely boy," was the general's remark as the young soldier passed into the weather-beaten tent which housed the staff.

A few months later the war ended, and both were mustered out of service and returned to their homes.

"And Elwood Hungerford died in your arms," said Lindell's mother after the first excitement of their meeting was over.

"Yes, mother; it was an awful night. It seemed so dreadful for him to die so far from home, and so young. To-morrow I must go and give his last message to his father and mother."

"Poor woman; she was almost heartbroken when the news came, and she drove over here a number of times to get any little word that she thought you might have written about him. I told her everything, but still she came and asked so eagerly that I was quite broken up over it myself.

Even when the colonel came home with all his honor, and the great welcome was given him in the city, she hardly smiled. You must tell her everything. For words and looks are precious when they are the last."

Long after he had retired, Lindell lay awake thinking of the mission which was to take him to the Hungerfords' the next day. He had always stood in awe of the father when he was plain Mr. Hungerford, and now that he had worn the eagles on his shoulders, he felt that it would be harder than ever to address him. But the mother and Helen, how could he ever convey to them all that was in the last look, and the love of that voice sinking into the hush of death? Helen was only a child of twelve and he a youth of seventeen. But there was many a time when he had looked back over his shoulder at her as she went down the hill from the schoolhouse gate, and many a time that a smile from her pretty young face had made him happy through the day. And often, when he caught the first glimpse of the evening star, he thought of her with a half hope that it might mean something in the future.

"I have been eagerly looking for you," said Mrs. Hungerford as she met him half-way down the walk. "I know you must be tired with your walk. Do not try to tell me anything until you

are rested." But boys are never tired much or long, and returned soldiers are quick to tell their story. When he had finished, Mrs. Hungerford sat with her face bathed in tears. Colonel Hungerford thanked him again and again, and then walked down to the gate with him. A splendid horse, saddled and bridled, stood at the hitching post.

"I want you to mount this horse, for it is yours," said the colonel.

"Oh, no, I cannot do that," was the quick reply.

"But how can I repay you for your kindness to my poor dying boy?"

"You owe me nothing. For you commanded a regiment and know that soldiers have nothing to do but duty. After they volunteer, all is duty. That was duty. Good evening, Colonel Hungerford."

And the young soldier hurried away. But before he reached home he had asked himself many times why little Helen did not appear.

"It was only because she had grown taller and become shy," said his mother.

"But," she added with a smile, "veterans should not be thinking of little girls of twelve." Lindell grew so silent that she left him, and went into the house to talk with Mr. Norwin about trying to get him off for college the next fall.

"We are going to have a good crop for once," she said, "and prices are still war high, and I think we can afford it, don't you? He is our only son, you know."

"Well, I suppose we can afford it if we have to. But if he is going off to school, I wish he had taken that horse. It would have helped to pay the bills."

"So it would, but it would also have spoiled a fine page in the boy's memory. Some things are good only when they are not paid for."

"That is so, but if Captain Clingman don't make the colonel pay for Tom's saving his life at Gettysburg some of these days, then I don't know men."

Now if there was anything which Mrs. Norwin thought her husband knew, it was men, and she laid his remark away for future reference.

"But there is some advantage in having your neighbors indebted to you," she remarked, "and Colonel Hungerford will have a great gift for somebody as the years go by."

"You can rest assured that they will never forget their debt, but if you are thinking of his daughter, don't toy with that ambition. Somebody might get disappointed. There is a queenly air on that young girl's face which seems to say, 'I am sure to make my own destiny. Don't try to play oak to my vine.' In fact, if she was not such a beau-

tiful child, I should expect her to be a woman's rights woman some day."

"That is to say, you think women of that class are generally rather plain."

"Oh, no, I did not say so, but somehow pretty women are not often seen on the platform throwing their arms out wildly after more rights. They get their hands on the scepter without becoming 'shrieking sisters.'"

"There is nothing sarcastic about that, of course, but there are some things in this world that ought to make every sister shriek, whether she is plain or pretty."

CHAPTER II.

A POLITICAL PLOT.

WHEN autumn came Lindell Norwin was sent away to school, and Jack Clingman, who had studied Latin as far as Virgil before he went to the army, entered his uncle's law office in Millersburg. The years went by and Lindell graduated from college at the age of twenty-two, and then went into journalism in New York City.

Jack hung out the sign, "John W. Clingman, Attorney at Law," and soon had a fine practice and not a little popularity throughout the county. The prophecies which his old neighbors in the debating society made about his future were fast being fulfilled. He was a great favorite at mass meetings, and but few juries could hold out against his persuasive eloquence.

But no man in the county was as popular as Colonel Hungerford. He was idolized by all the men who had been in his regiment, and they were scattered over the whole district. And he was in warm sympathy with the farmers in the Granger movement which swept over the West in 1873. The

feeling respecting railroad discriminations reached an intensity that year which was irresistible, and left its permanent impress.

The congressional campaign was approaching, and everything pointed towards the nomination of the colonel as the man to save the district for the party.

"We must have a man whom the farmers want," said the local papers, "or the tide which is rolling over the country will sweep us out to sea."

It was at the beginning of this agitation that Colonel Hungerford said to his wife, after returning from Millersburg one evening, "Some of the politicians want me to run for governor."

"For governor!" said Mrs. Hungerford with surprise. "I thought they were talking of nominating you for Congress."

"So they were, but now Captain Clingman, Tom Culverwell and Judge Barrier insist that with my popularity among the farmers and record as a soldier I could swing a longer pole and knock down a bigger plum."

"And are you going to try it?" said Mrs. Hungerford with increasing animation.

"No, dear."

"Why?"

"Mostly because I could not get the nomination. Captain Clingman is deep, and so are the rail-

road men. They do not fight those who are opposed to them as the rebels did us at Gettysburg, face to face, hand to hand. They let a man down some other way. Captain Clingman and Judge Barrier know well enough that I could not run the machine's candidate for governor off the track. But they hope to side-track me in the congressional race. They know that I cannot or would not be a candidate for two nominations. If I stand for governor, that means that I give up the race for Congress. I hope I have lived too long to be caught in that trap."

A slight shadow of disappointment passed over Mrs. Hungerford's face; for she was ambitious.

"But you intend to run for Congress?"

"I am in the hands of my friends," said the colonel with a waggish look.

The next week the county newspapers announced that Colonel Hungerford would under no consideration be a candidate for governor. A few nights afterward, if the man who was returning home late along the principal street of Millersburg had looked up at Judge Barrier's office window, he would have seen the lights still burning. Within were the judge himself, Captain Clingman, Tom Culverwell and one other. Tom had just returned from a thorough canvass of the district, and reported that Colonel Hungerford was everywhere the

favorite except with the men who were in the ring.

"And this would be a bad year for a machine candidate," he added.

"Hungerford will be nominated if we don't do something," said the judge, "and then we shall have a congressman from this district opposed to the railroads, and the next thing you know there will be an investigating committee trying to find out why you and Captain Clingman are getting rich off your coal lands and the colonel is making nothing out of his mines. The first thing you know he will be on that rebate business by which we get fifty cents a ton and he does not. And another thing, the whole county will find out why these Millersburg butchers had to close up and the new butchers buy their meat from the Chicago packing houses.

"This thing of making the farmers ship all their fat stock to Chicago and the butchers all their meat back again in order that the Chicago millionaires may collect one toll and the railroad companies two, is not a matter which will bear very strong light.

"Colonel Hungerford has got to be beaten. What is your plan, Clingman?" But Captain Clingman was silent.

"Why not take the colonel into the ring," said Culverwell.

"Because he would not come in," said the captain.

"What, then, would you do?"

"There is only one thing to do."

"And what is that?" eagerly asked the judge.

"Make Jack the candidate. He was raised among the farmers, is a farmer's son, is a pet speaker with the farmers and almost as popular as the colonel himself; and he would run like wildfire if we ever got him started. He has never been charged with being a railroad man, for there are lots of things that the farmers do not know."

"And there are lots of ambitious mammas in this county who would like to have him for a son-in-law," said Culverwell, "and they would bring their hard-headed husbands around."

"But," said the judge, impatiently, "how are you going to get the colonel off the track? Of course Jack would be a capital candidate, but the faster the trains, the worse the collision when they are both on the same track, and we don't want to have a party smash-up."

"I'll fix that," replied Captain Clingman. "Tom will go home with me to-night, and we will see you later on."

Judge Barrier's confidence in Captain Clingman's ability to fix things was as great as that of his nephew, and the midnight council broke up

with a solemn conviction that Colonel Hungerford would not go to Congress.

When once in their carriage and out in the loneliness of the country road, the captain unfolded his plan.

"Tom," he said, "you will have to do something that you may not like. But you know that I formed the combination that made Hungerford a major and you a lieutenant, and that it ended in his becoming colonel, and in your saving his life. And you know that his last word to you, when you both took off your shoulder-straps and returned to private life, was that he would hold himself under everlasting obligation to you. I don't suppose that you ever intended to draw a check on him for the amount, and you have already got glory enough out of it to turn any other young man's head. But with you and me this is business as well as politics, and business is business, and sentiment must give way to politics. If you ask Colonel Hungerford to stand aside for your dear cousin Jack, the pride of the Clingman and Culverwell families, as a personal favor to yourself, he will do it. I know him from away back; he has an awful sense of honor, too much by miles for politics."

"But you know I believe in the power behind the throne, and Mrs. Hungerford is a very ambi-

tious woman. Nothing would please her better than to go to Washington with the colonel; besides, Helen is to come out of college this summer. What a great thing it would be to give her a chance in Washington society! For they say that she is the handsomest and most talented young woman that ever came out of the Soldier's Belt, and our county has always been famous for its country belles. You will not get the colonel's wife to consent to such an arrangement; and the colonel pledged himself to her before he did to me."

They drove a mile or more before another word was spoken. Then as they drew up at the gate the captain replied, "What if something else should happen before the convention meets? I heard Jack say awhile ago, when his sisters were teasing him about a wife, that he was waiting for Helen Hungerford to get through college, and now that she will soon come back a graduate with flying colors, pretty and full of romantic ideas, perhaps Jack will be smitten, and Helen could hardly help thinking it a tremendous stroke of good fortune to go right from college into Washington society as the wife of a brilliant and handsome young congressman. Just think what might happen if Jack should get smitten with her and lay siege to her heart! Mrs. Hungerford has always been very fond of Jack, and it might quite reconcile her to staying at home.

"For there comes a time when we transfer our ambitious hopes to our children. A mother looks in the glass and sees that the bloom is gone from her cheeks. She looks in her daughter's face and it is there. After that the mother passes her hopes over to the daughter. Don't you see that is why I am pushing Jack for Congress? I have stopped reaching up to the withering boughs of age for political plums and am centering everything on Jack."

"Oh, fudge! You just said that business is business, and now you are mixing sentiment, poetry and politics. It shows that two o'clock in the morning is too late for you to be out. Let us drive in, put up the horses and go to bed."

"All right. We won't worry. But mark my words for it, there will be no collision between the Hungerfords and the Clingmans. Colonel Hungerford and myself have never been warm friends, but our children have always made up for all coldness.

"There are months yet before the convention, and in the meantime we must keep the newspapers talking about John W. Clingman, the brilliant attorney, the brave ex-soldier, the farmers' friend and the man with a future. And we must have him at all the Granger meetings and all the picnics in the district."

"One word more, uncle," said Tom; "who was that other man in the office to-night?"

"I don't know him, but understand that he is some friend of the judge."

SAMMY SUDDENDROP.

The following morning there was a little episode in the usually smooth history of the Hungerford house.

"Sammy, you were out very late last night," said Mrs. Hungerford at the breakfast table, with a tone of severity unusual for her. "You have been out every night this week, and when it comes to two o'clock in the morning, it is time to call a halt and start an investigation. There is only one safe place for a boy at midnight, and that is in bed. Boys see better at night by closing their eyes and going to sleep. The best thing that even guardian angels can do for them is to tuck them under the coverlets. I am not exactly an angel, but I cannot have you out at night. Where were you, Sammy?" Sammy glanced appealingly at the colonel, then riveted his gaze on his plate of hot buckwheat cakes and said nothing.

Mrs. Hungerford riveted her gaze alternately on Sammy and her husband, and quickly concluded to say nothing more herself. It was easy enough to understand that the colonel meant something by

trying to signal to Sammy under the table with his foot, if he did miss the boy's foot and hit her own.

Now Sammy Suddendrop was a boy of nineteen whose father lost his life in the colonel's regiment at Antietam, and whose mother never recovered from the shock, but went into consumption and died the next spring. Every day for weeks before her death Mrs. Hungerford drove over to her little house by the blacksmith shop, for that was Dave Suddendrop's trade before he threw his hammer down on the anvil with the exclamation that he would not set any more horseshoes until he had helped to set the country to rights. In her last moments the poor young mother said: "I have but two wishes, that Sammy may find a good home, and that they will bring my husband's body back from Antietam so that we may sleep our last sleep together on the hillside, and that Sammy may see the people strew flowers upon the grave of his soldier father. If he sees a wreath of honor lying upon the tombstone every year, it will help to make a man of him." Then Mrs. Hungerford put her arm under the shrunken little neck, stroked the rich brown hair, and with a kiss on the white forehead, sealed her promise to the dying young mother that her boy should never be without a home while she had one of her own.

When the funeral was over, she gathered up the boy, his tattered books and other belongings, put them in her carriage and took them home with her. Sammy was too young to be much saddened by the loss of his mother, and Mrs. Hungerford's heart was too tender, with the vision of a dying face before her, to adopt strict methods of discipline at the start, all the more needed because during his mother's sickness he had lapsed into lawlessness.

The result was that she had a harum-scarum lad on her hands, who never thought the farm big enough, who knocked down the plums and apples before they were ripe, went swimming and fishing instead of to school, broke into the neighbors' water-melon patches, tormented the patience out of all his Sunday-school teachers, got into disastrous complications with his day teachers, had serious collisions with the farm hands, and was in imminent danger of being voted an irredeemable nuisance by the whole neighborhood.

But Mrs. Hungerford read a quotation from Burke one day that "law is benevolence working by rule;" then there was a change of administration. "Sammy's father died to maintain the authority of government," she said to herself, "and here I have been letting this boy grow up in lawlessness. Benevolence is going to work by rule

now, and Sammy will have to walk the line hereafter."

It was hard work, and Sammy was in his teens before he was willing to admit that somebody had got to surrender, and that it was not likely to be the lady of the house. "She has a great heart," he said to himself one evening as he rode a colt to the pasture for the cows. "She can talk so softly and smile so sweetly that you think she is better than an angel, and if you wanted to tell her a lie it would stick in your throat; but gracious, what a will she's got! I never saw her cry but once since I've been here, and that was when she was looking at Elwood's old blue coat with the bullet-hole in it and the blood-stain, and one other time when Helen went away to school. She watched the buggy until it was out of sight, then she came back to the house, went upstairs, looked into Helen's empty room, came down again and burst into tears.

"'When you send girls away to school,' she said, 'they are gone. You never get anything but snatches of them again.' But then, who would not cry over Helen's going away? I went around behind the barn that morning and cried myself. I would rather have the frost catch the peach crop, and the bugs eat up all the watermelon vines, than to have Helen away all the fall, winter and spring.

"But what is the use of fooling? I might as well give up the fight with her and get around on the sunny side of the house. It always feels mighty cold when Mrs. Hungerford don't smile. I suppose, anyhow, that a boy is like this colt. It needs lots of pulling and hauling on the reins until it learns to keep the road. If I take the road and keep it, that will end the racket, and I'll get somewhere by the time I'm a man."

Sammy's new resolution worked a great change. But his rollicking disposition and love of fun were so irrepressible that the colonel said he was cut out for an end man in a minstrel company, or clown in a circus. Mrs. Hungerford thought that he ought to be sent to college, that he could join a glee club and be the wit; for college glee clubs were in sore need of men who could be funny when they tried to be. But Sammy said that the farm was good enough for him, that Abraham Lincoln never went to college, and he got there. He would rather study the stars first-hand on a summer night, and as for Latin and Greek, they were dead languages anyhow, with dictionaries full of roots and stems. If there was anything he despised, it was to strike dead roots with the plow, and he was not going to college to hunt for them. Anyhow, Helen would bring home college honors enough for the whole family. After that the college matter was

not pressed. For Mrs. Hungerford observed, "You can't drive a boy into an education. For one you may open the gate and put a purse in his hand, but he won't go through. Another comes up ragged and barefooted, and if the gate is barred he climbs over the wall and comes out with the laurel on his brow. Besides, she felt that she had accomplished something for Sammy in restoring him to civilized ways.

But now that he was staying out at night she was troubled. Visions of saloons, of groups of bad boys on street corners where speech is corrupting, and hosts of other evil things which fly across a worried mother's imagination, rose up before her. Though disconcerted by her dash into the matter at the breakfast table, she was determined to know more about it. Sammy kept well out of her way all day, but in the evening while standing at the back gate with the bridle rein of his young riding horse in hand, and taking a word of instruction from the colonel, he received a message from Mrs. Hungerford that she wanted to see him before he went to town.

"What shall I say to her?" he asked the colonel.

"Tell her all you know, and I will tell her the rest."

Sammy told her that he was very sorry that she was so much troubled about him, that he was not

going wild, and had not set out for ruin, but that "he was running this line of business on orders from headquarters." "That man who was here the other day, who didn't leave his name," he said, "made the colonel feel as I suppose he used to feel when there was a battle in the air; and he has kept me going down-town every night since to see what I could find out about him, who he was in company with, whether he went to saloons or up the Poker Stairway in Rich's Block, or—to—to—bed."

"And what did you find out, Sammy?"

"That he went to Judge Barrier's office one or two evenings for a while, and every evening slipped up the Poker Stairway, when he thought nobody was looking."

"You have turned detective, I see; but go on."

"I have not far to go. Last night he went to Barrier's office and stayed there until after midnight. I don't want to tell you who else was there, for I was not the only night owl out this way last night. But when he and the judge came out, they looked up and down the street, and I heard the judge say, 'We'll fix the colonel all right.' That was all I heard, they talked so low."

That evening there was a bright fire in the parlor grate to take the chill off the air, and Mrs. Hungerford was assiduous in her attention to her

husband's comfort. He easily slipped into a confiding mood and explained matters.

"The man who was here that day," he said, "claimed to be the representative of some heirs in New York City who dispute the title to this section of land on which we live."

"Ah, there it is," said Mrs. Hungerford with a start. "Father never did believe in having anything to do with these 'patent lands.' He always said that the titles were not safe, that they were generally the best lands, but what good would they do, if you lost your home and all your labor, or had to pay a big sum to clear the title? And now here it comes, just when we are having so much trouble with the coal land."

"But it is not so bad as that, Frances. The man says that the wife of John Thomas Jones, whose name appears in the abstract two or three transfers back, never signed the deed and wouldn't sign it, because her money bought the property and she didn't want her husband to get the money, and now their children, who are scattered over the country, have sent this man on to claim their interest. I did not buy from Jones and so did not inquire about the wife's signature. When I consulted John Clingman, the other day, he said that he discovered while going over the records several years ago that there was no wife's signature to

the Jones deed for my section, but it did appear in the deed for his father's section, which was given by Jones a year later. It puzzled him a little, he said, but he concluded that Jones was enjoying single blessedness when he gave the first deed, and that a year later he had married. He also said that when he spoke to his father about it, the captain told him to pay no attention to it, that if it was stirred up it would worry Mrs. Hungerford, for the Ellwoods always were afraid of patent titles, and if let alone probably nothing would ever be heard of it. I wrote at once to Lindell Norwin to engage a reliable attorney for me to investigate the matter in New York. But at the same time I suspected that the fellow is a sharper or blackleg, and I have kept Sammy on his track, for he is like his father, secretive and trusty. Dave Suddendrop was the best man in the regiment to find out what was going on along the line."

"But why does the man go to Judge Barrier's office?"

"That is what puzzles me."

"And who were the other men that were there last night?"

"Two of our neighbors, but don't ask their names just yet."

"But why were they there?"

"I think it was because they may be uneasy about the title to their property."

"Are you sure that is all?"

"No; as the saying is, a man can't be sure of anything but death and taxes. I am sure, however, that the man is a gambler and a bad one."

"I think there is more in this matter. The men who came out of that office at two o'clock last night are politicians, you know."

CHAPTER III.

HOME FROM COLLEGE.

IT was two days since Helen Hungerford's return from college, and on this beautiful June morning she sat by an open window which looked out upon the yard, rich in greensward and flowers, and across the low-trimmed hedges of the highway to lovely hills which sloped away to a distant stream. The air was laden with the fragrance of roses, and musical with the songs of birds and the hum of bees as they dropped into the flowers. Grass, shrubs and trees were glittering in the sunlight, and the whole outer world was bathed in summer splendor. As she gazed across the fields where shade trees stood up so round and still, she exclaimed: "What can be more beautiful than a perfect summer morning?"

It was a joyous welcome from nature to a spirit freed from a long course of classical study. "We salute you, we salute you, with the breath of morning, with the fragrance of the field, with the joy of the earth," was what in her buoyant mood everything seemed to say to her.

Helen had come home with the valedictorian's honors, a beautiful young woman, not quite twenty-one. In person she was a little above medium height, with fine form, gracefully poised head, eyes of much depth and meaning slightly veiled by long lashes, natural color and winsome smile, and a voice so modulated as to be at once an intimation of music and earnestness. It was no small part of the persuasive influence which she wielded over others.

Her father's insistence on a soldier's erectness, her constant exercise on horseback from childhood, and the freedom of gardens, orchards and meadows and open highways, had given her a vigor of health which carried her through the trying ordeal of a long course of study without break of time or drawback.

A great favorite with her teachers, and popular with her schoolmates, she had been much petted and flattered, with the effect of increasing her spirit of independence rather than her pride or vanity. Too completely absorbed in her college career and its opportunities and duties to think much of herself, and too uniformly successful in mastering her tasks to seriously consider life's difficulties, she had acquired the habit of moving forward to whatever came next without asking many questions of herself or the world. She gave the impression of

expecting success without seeming to be egotistical, and her teachers and friends thought of nothing for her but a fine career.

"She has wonderful poise," said the president of the college, "and if she makes a serious mistake in marriage or in the management of life's affairs, I shall be greatly surprised."

The troops of girls who were laughing, shouting, crying and kissing one another at the depot said, "Happy Helen, don't forget us in the fine days to come."

The two days since her return had been spent with her mother, who gazed at her with a deep, yearning look which seemed to say, "If I could only keep you this near me always." There were many questions to ask on both sides; on Helen's side about the old neighbors and schoolmates, and all the happenings in the Soldiers' Belt; and on the mother's side about the newest ideas in college circles and the battle with books and board. "The battle with books," said Helen, "was more easy, certain and satisfactory than the battle with board. Sometimes I think that the matron of a boarding school does not believe that there is any waste of tissue in a girl student's system, or that she has an appetite for anything but table etiquette. If you help a boy to scant allowance, he clears off his plate so suddenly that you can't help knowing that

there is a large vacuum down below which he abhors as much as nature. But girls are not given to knife and fork rushes or 'cane rushes.' However, I don't look as though I had suffered much, do I, mother?" "No," was the reply, "and I presume that most boarding school girls suffer more in imagination than otherwise."

While Helen sat by the window her mother was cutting rosebuds which were opening on the bushes down by the front gate. A gentleman who was passing, in a smart road wagon drawn by a handsome pair of chestnut-sorrels, reined up his horses and stopped for a few minutes.

"Who was that gentleman?" said Helen, after her mother had pinned a bunch of lovely rosebuds upon her bosom, and placed another in her dark brown hair.

"That was John Clingman. He is going out to the old home to spend the day. I asked him to call on his way back. He said he should be happy to do so, and present you his congratulations on your successful finish at college."

"The local papers which you sent me, mother, have had much to say about him the last two months. He is always rising in his profession, getting a pension for some old soldier, winning a difficult case, saving a farmer from some great injustice, making a matchless speech, and doing a

score of other things which would make stepping stones to a great biography some day. Is he really so wonderful?"

"For a man of only twenty-eight he has had remarkable success. I take much pleasure and pride in his career, for he and Elwood were like twins. I think that if the district had not settled upon your father for Congress, John would be asked to carry the banner."

"And so you think it settled that papa is to be nominated for Congress?"

"It seems so. Wouldn't you like to go to Washington?"

"Why, yes, it does seem, in the ordinary view of matters, that it would be perfectly lovely, as the girls say. But you see I want to take a post-graduate course in an eastern college, and then I want to spend another year in Europe, that is if papa's money and good-nature hold out. He is a good papa, but he will soon be thinking I ought to do something else beside tug at his purse strings."

"Oh, well, you will have time for a good deal before going to Washington, because after a man is elected to Congress it is an age before he takes his seat."

JOHN CLINGMAN CALLS TO CONGRATULATE HELEN.

In the evening as the sun was sinking into its

green bed of the distant western fields, the chestnut-sorrels were reined up at the hitching post at Colonel Hungerford's front gate, and John Clingman came briskly up the walk. He was a handsome young man. Nobody failed to make this remark about him. Nearly six feet tall, with a soldier's erectness, and the color of health and the impress of intellectuality in his fine face, and an air of strength and mastery he easily took his place in the world as one to be observed and recognized by men and admired by women. Mrs. Hungerford met him at the door and conducted him to the parlor, furnished for the comfort of a country home, rather than the demands of fashion, with an abundance of easy chairs in its ample spaces, and great vases of freshly cut roses on mantel and table.

When Helen entered, she greeted the young lawyer with the cordiality of an old neighbor, rather than as a man who had put between the present and the past that indefinable but real distance which separates success from the play of childhood and the dreams of youth. She had so often taken him by the hand, when a little girl, and walked between him and Elwood as they sauntered through the orchard in search of the first ripe peaches, that she could not straightway dismiss all the old-time familiarity, and view him as a new and unknown factor to be reckoned with in the problem of life.

The sorrels grew restless before their master appeared. They were not used to waiting so long. Mrs. Hungerford's "come again" was animated, and Helen cordially joined in the invitation.

After her mother had withdrawn, Helen sat by the window wrapped in meditation. The scenes of childhood returned, and a long procession of events and of schoolmates and neighbors passed before her. She saw the little schoolhouse on the hill, the boys leaping out of the door when the teacher said, "Dismissed," the troop of girls throwing their sunbonnets back upon their shoulders to let the breezes from the green fields kiss their cheeks; Lindell Norwin looking shy, but planning to meet her at the foot-log over the stream when the water in the little brook was high, and his hesitating way when he gave her bunches of wild flowers. She heard again the drum and fife when the regiment gathered on the square at Millersburg, and her father galloped along the line, and wives, mothers and sweethearts sobbed and wrung their hands as the men were hurried into a long train of box cars; and, like a day that can never die, she remembered that afternoon when Elwood slipped out of the house, and she followed him until she saw him join Jack down the road, and then they went over the hill and she never saw him again until a metallic coffin was brought into the

house one day, and all the people from far and near came and filled the house and yard, and then followed the young soldier to the grave. The one was taken, the other left. And now here was Jack; why did Elwood fall, and he live? she asked. Who could tell, but the voice that speaks for eternity? The apple-trees are full of blossoms, but how many of them are only the banners of spring, never the red-ripe fruit of autumn! Elwood threw out the banner of life's splendid hope, and then dropped into the dust.

"But I know now," she said, "why he was so fond of Jack. He was born to draw his companions to him, and to lead them. I feel as though I had met a man to-night. His grace is the grace of strength. The tiger is graceful because it is strong, and so is this man. They say he is eloquent; and eloquence too is strength, power of thought, vigor of imagination, mastery of words, generalship which marshals figures and phrases and hurls them against the line of opposing ideas, or leads them up to the triumphs of persuasion. 'Like the voice of many waters,' we say; and many waters are mighty. So is the spirit of the man or woman that moves the world with eloquence.

"He is a man worth meeting for what he can bring to you, and for the interpretation which he

can put into your own thoughts. His ready recognition of your deeper meaning helps you to unfold it and give words to it. But so penetrating a mind is not always comfortable company. For words are made to conceal as well as reveal thought, and to leave nothing unrevealed in conversation is to rob your personality of the charms of mystery. 'To the unknown gods,' said the Athenians. When there is nothing unknown the awe is gone, and worship loses the power of its deepest spell. It is not well to have a man see too deep down in your mind.

"But I wish we could analyze men as we analyze flowers and stones. You can pick the petals off a flower and assign it to its exact class, or put acid on a stone and know whether there is carbonate of lime in it or not. How convenient it would be if we could tell what men and women are by dropping acid on them!"

"This man's intellectual qualities are as clear as the trees which stand up in the sunlight of the pasture fields, but his moral nature does not so readily reveal itself, and yet it may be as rugged and sublime as the mountain heights over which the blue haze lingers and leaves us wondering and dreaming."

Helen's meditation did not much miss the mark. John Clingman was a strong man. Nature made

him a favorite and lavished her gifts upon his body and mind. A college course might have done something for him, but he was not dependent upon the advantages of a college or wealth or name.

The open gates of time, a world and its people, were enough for him. Of fine sensibilities, everything above and below, in field and woods, in human faces and human speech, in smiles and tears, shouts of victory and cries of pain, taught him. His ear caught the music of rustling leaves, sighing winds, murmuring streams, and his voice gave it back again in tones that thrilled his hearers. In the open sunlight, which makes hills and hedges stand out in clear form, he learned that lesson of simplicity of thought which put him in closest touch with the minds of common people.

His penetrating power of mind and ability to read character had much to do with his great success in addressing a jury. He saw the strength of principle or stubbornness of prejudice in a juror's mind, and devoted his arguments to the work of building up or tearing down the mental array, as the case required.

The world, as the world goes, found no fault with his habits. Even the reformers had a good word for him. He neither smoked nor drank, and was not fond of clubs. He was often seen at church, and was a favorite when he appeared in

society. Ambitious dames sometimes complained that he neither accepted invitations nor sent regrets. But he apologized so graciously and earnestly when reminded of it, and made himself so agreeable the next time, that he never lost friends. Besides, it was well known that he often got lost among his books, and that he counted the minutes. They summed up their opinion of him by saying that he was the most brilliant young man that the "Soldiers' Belt" had ever "raised," and that he wore like steel. And having made up their minds to regard him as an extraordinary honor to their section, the people dismissed all evidence of his failings.

But as John Clingman drove slowly home that night, past the farm-houses where the lights were out, and along the smoothly trimmed hedges over which he could see the long, straight rows of young corn in the moonlight, he was thinking to himself what a beautiful pair of eyes had met his occasional glance, and that they went far deeper than the eyes which looked at him when he arose to address the multitude. In a word, he was thinking Helen's own thoughts about himself, that he had been with one who could hear more than words, and see more than looks or smiles or sunlight or shadow of countenance.

It was not his opinion that she was in any need

of a chemical process to detect character or the quality of mind.

"If there is any unexplored part of me," he said, "which I don't want discovered, I'd better put it under lock and key before I go there again. But then it is the trait of a noble woman to see the good rather than the evil, and it may be that she will discover some vein of gold down in the fissures of porphyry which I have not known myself. It is a part of a woman's work in making men better to reveal to them their nobler selves. At all events, with woman's fine charity, it is better for a man to find himself out through her intuition than to wait until the curtain goes up before the multitude. And, anyhow, I shall call on her again, because she is immensely interesting."

CUPID POISES IN THE AIR.

A month later John Clingman's office boy began to be surprised at the many reasons which he found for going to the old home.

"He went out to his father's this afternoon," was the reply which he gave to man after man who came into the office to see him.

Finally an old acquaintance, who had a big law case in his hands, blurted out, "What is he doing at the farm this summer? Plowing corn, making hay, or what?"

"Making hay, I guess," said the boy with a titter.

His sisters said: "We're glad that you come out so often now, Jack. You are a good brother to be so fond of us all, and not let business drown your love of home. But we have not forgotten that you used to say that you were waiting for Helen Hungerford to get through college."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Jack. "I like to talk with Miss Hungerford because she is up to date. I call upon her one evening for the same reason that I spend the next in my library. She is up on science, philosophy, literature, poetry, everything. And it is easier and much more pleasant to lean back in an easy chair by an open window where the breezes come across a yard full of roses, and look into the face of a brilliant graduate while she talks philosophy and science to you, than it is to shut yourself up in a hot room, with the dust of the street coming in at the window, and hunt up the same information through the long and wearisome chapters of books.

"The books sometimes make me sleepy. Helen does not. I find myself a clear gainer. I'm several volumes ahead already. I'll soon have a great stock of new and well assorted ideas for speeches at Granger picnics, and all sorts of meetings. And I have taken in enough of the pathos of poetry to melt a dozen more juries into tears."

"But how handy it would be, Jack," said the younger sister, as she tossed her long curls back over her shoulder, "to have such a young woman for a wife! You would not need to go into your library at all, but could just sit down in a rocking chair and look into those wonderful brown eyes while she talked you full of speeches."

"Ahem—but then I should have the dress-makers' and the millinery bills to pay, and there would have to be a big house, and summer trips and what not? With such a home as this I do not need another, and three sisters cannot afford to lose their only brother to get another sister."

"But, Jack, don't you see that you have already given her your head, and how long will it be until she has your heart? Girls play for hearts, not heads."

"High, low, Jack, and the game," shouted Mildred, the oldest sister.

Jack laughed with the rest. "But Miss Hungerford does not play," he said. "She is a little bit pious. But anyhow, she does not play for a man's heart. If she has ever thought about the 'two-celled heart that beats with one full stroke,' she gives no signs of it.

"She is the most inscrutable person that I ever met. I have never seen a man on a jury whose thoughts I could not read as I talked on, but if I

talked with Miss Hungerford a month, I should not know what I most wanted to know."

"Just so, Jack. What you most want to know. Take care, take care. Cupid is poising in the air. He loves a shining mark."

"Oh, no, you mean death loves a shining mark. Good-bye; I shall not be out again this week."

Nevertheless he did come. He said that pressing business brought him out to see his father, and the two were closeted together in the library for an hour.

When the neighbors saw the chestnut-sorrels so often at Colonel Hungerford's gate, the men asked whether it meant politics, the young people laughed and looked wise, and the mothers, without marriageable daughters, said, "What a splendid match it would make! They would be a brilliant couple."

CHAPTER IV.

STARLIGHT OBSERVATIONS ON GIRL GRADUATES AND LOVE.

SAMMY SUDDENDROP sat in the starlight on a bench which stood near the well by the back gate.

"What are you doing out here, Sammy?" said a soft voice. "Are you star-gazing?"

"No, Helen, I am just trying to keep up connections with old notions. We've had such a lot of philosophy around the house lately, and I have heard so much about mental phenomena—is that what you call it?—and the subjective and objective, that I don't always know where I am at. I come out here and listen to the dogs bark, the owls hoot and the crickets chirrup, because it makes me feel that the world is still doing business at the old stand; at least, that it is not all in your mind, as the big men say, or all in your eye, as it seems when the dust blows in the corn field."

"You are not poking fun at me, are you, Sammy?"

"Oh, no, you girl graduates are all right. You have your sheepskins tied up in blue ribbons, and

all feel as proud as a horse that has taken the first premium at a county fair. You all know how to run the parlor end of a house, but some day, when you get married, you will find out that men don't care half so much for high thinking as for high living. I tell you, there is lots of stomach in a man, and if the dinner isn't cooked right, it's no use to tell him what some big philosopher thinks. If I was a girl graduate and wanted to take a post-graduate course, it would be in the kitchen."

"But what would you do if you were a boy graduate?"

"I have never leveled my mind at that question. But I have been thinking that I ought to have taken up your mother's offer to send me through college. I didn't want to do it because I thought then that college boys had to study, but now that the girls do the studying and the boys do athletics, I most wish I had tried it.

"Wouldn't I have been a buster in a college yell? or a kicker in a foot-ball team? And when it comes to scrapping between freshmen and sophomores, I could have done as big a day's work as any of them. When I read in the papers how college boys maul one another, it makes me want to run right off, and take off my coat, roll up my sleeves and begin—the study of Latin."

"You missed your opportunity, didn't you, Sammy?"

"Perhaps. But who was it that came this evening?"

"Cousin Gladys."

"And no gentleman called?"

"No, Sammy; were you expecting one?"

Sammy laughed and said, "I don't suppose that it is anything to you, Helen, but at the Culverwell party the other night the boys and girls were all saying that John Clingman has fallen in love."

"That would not be strange; such things have often happened before in the world, and with so many pretty girls in the country might easily happen again. But what is love, Sammy?"

"Love? Love? Why, love's like the measles. When I got the measles so bad, I didn't go around the house asking, 'What is the measles? What is the measles?' but I went to bed, asked your mother to send for the doctor, and then lay and watched the door for him to come.

"If ever you get in love, Helen, you'll not ask, 'What is love?' but you'll hang around the front window watching for the young man to come."

"Your experience seems to have gone further than the measles, Sammy. But I want you to do me a favor. I am going home with cousin Gladys in the morning, and I want you to drive over for me in the evening. Will you come?"

"Certainly, Providence and the colonel permitting."

"Good-night."

"Bye, bye."

"Do her a favor? What wouldn't I do for Helen Hungerford?" said Sammy to himself. "I like to tease her because that is a boy's nature. This is a great house when she is at home. I wish I knew as much as she does! But if I did, I know my head would feel as an anaconda must when he has swallowed an ox; only that the anaconda is satisfied, but the more a man knows, they say, the more he wants to know."

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

"I am afraid that it will rain before you get back to-night," said Mrs. Hungerford, as Helen and her cousin Gladys stepped into the latter's phaeton. "Sammy will come for you, but if it storms don't try to return this evening."

The road led past the home of Captain Clingman, and as they approached the house Miss Mildred Clingman, who was a few months older than Helen, and the oldest of Jack's three sisters, was preparing to mount a beautiful dapple-gray horse which stood at the front gate, for a morning canter. When she saw Helen, she called to her sisters and they all gathered around the phaeton as it stopped, drew Helen out and kissed her, and then stood looking at her with eager admiration.

"Why don't you come to see me more often?" asked Helen.

"Oh, another member of the family has monopolized all the calls at your house," said Daisy, laughing.

Helen's cheek colored a little, and the girls were much amused at her confusion. But she rallied and said, "This is a political year, and the gentlemen of our two houses seem much interested in such matters. But why don't you come along? Being farmer's daughters, you are opposed to monopolies, are you not? Perhaps you can break up this one of which you complain."

"We have already delivered several speeches on the subject out here under the shade trees to a big audience of one man, but I fear we are not good talkers," said Mildred.

"One little word from you, Helen," said Daisy, "would smash up the monopoly."

After the laughter, in which Helen heartily joined, while the color again mounted to her cheeks, she replied:

"Indeed, if it is oppressing the community, making times hard and money scarce, I shall speak the word. It shall not be said against Colonel Hungerford that his own daughter favored a monopoly. But we must drive on."

The girls kissed her again, said good-bye to her

cousin, and with waving handkerchiefs sent them on their way.

"What sweet girls they are!" said Gladys. "They would be charming sisters-in-law, wouldn't they, Helen?"

"Don't say that, cousin Gladys," replied Helen, while a look came into her face which meant that the subject was closed.

A half-mile further out the road, as they rounded a little grove behind which the creek ran with its valley of pasture land, from which floated the music of cow bells, they passed a pretty cottage partially hid by the trees. It stood near the road, but the little yard was filled with flower-beds which always attracted the eyes of the passers-by. On the portico sat a white-haired woman, who seemed to be prematurely gray. She had no work in her hands, but did not look up or appear to notice the handsome young faces which for a moment were turned toward her. If she had, she could have seen a pitying, loving look which might have put a moment of consolation into her sad heart, as morning puts a drop of dew upon a withering blade of grass.

This cottage was once the home, and this sorrowing woman was the mother, of Nellie Millbrook; and in other days Nellie was one of the prettiest and merriest of the group of girls who romped un-

der the box-elders of the Morning Side school-yard, or on winter evenings came to spelling and singing schools with rosy cheeks which looked the more beautiful as they shone out through white hoods. But since her disappearance some years before, her name was mentioned only with mysterious seriousness, and her history was a subject over which neighboring parents dropped the curtain when talking with their children.

"Brooding, brooding," said Helen as they passed on. "Oh, the sorrow of it! If a child dies and is laid away in the grave, the mother can come and look upon the little grass-covered mound and say, 'Mother earth has taken the body to her own great bosom, and the spirit is in the spirit world, where it may never hear anything harsher than the whir of an angel's wing.' But when the child is nursed and loved to budding womanhood, and then slips over the brink into the polluted stream of evil, and is borne down in the darkness, how can a mother bear it?"

"Those white hairs tell of an awful sorrow, of a cruel memory that smites with a perpetual stroke. How well I remember when Nellie used to take me in her lap and put roses in my hair! She loved me. But now all is lost."

Helen's last words came with a sob, and her face was glistening with tears.

Gladys broke the silence which followed by saying, "It is reported that Nellie was seen in the neighborhood a few days ago."

A STRANGE MEETING IN A STORM.

In the evening Sammy Suddendrop came for Helen, and in spite of the threatening storm she insisted on returning home.

"We shall take the old road and go in by the back gate of the farm," she said. "It will save a mile, and I think we shall reach home before the storm begins."

But the storm gathered fast; the clouds swept down upon the earth in heavy masses and the darkness deepened. The road was an obscure one, not much used, and Sammy could do but little more than hold hard upon the reins of the spirited horses, and trust to their sagacity to keep the way. With each flash of lightning they glanced ahead to look for any chance vehicle which might be coming that way.

"There is a carriage and a bridge," cried Helen, catching at the reins to help check the horses. Then followed darkness which might have been felt. But with another flash of lightning they saw that the carriage was but a few feet away, and that in a moment more they would both be upon the little bridge, which was too narrow to permit them to pass each other.

"Hold the lines," said Sammy, and springing out, he took the horses by the bits, backed them carefully near the edge of the bank, and then shouted to the other driver to come on. The driver approached slowly, and, when alongside of Helen's carriage, paused for a moment to make sure of the space between the wheels and the opposite edge of the bank. A thunderbolt struck into a neighboring tree with a deafening crash, and in the glaring light Helen saw a man and woman seated behind the driver. Their frightened faces were turned full upon her, and as their eyes met, the woman uttered a low cry; the man shouted with an oath to the driver to go on, and he struck the horses and dashed away in the darkness.

Helen dropped the reins in her agitation, but Sammy led the horses across the bridge, and then resumed his seat.

"Did you see that woman?" asked Helen in a frightened tone, but with passionate earnestness.

"Yes."

"Was she Nellie Millbrook?"

"Yes."

"But who was the man?"

"Get up," shouted Sammy to the horses.

"Don't talk, Helen; I've got all I can do driving over this old road in such an awful storm. The next time it's working up a storm in the west

we'll take the big road, or hang out at your Uncle Ben's for the night. That last thunder-clap was too much like the judgment day for me."

As they turned down a hill in the woods Sammy said:

"Are you afraid of ghosts, Helen?"

"No; why do you ask?"

"Because they say ghosts like to frisk around in storms, and we are coming now to the old oak tree where the man was murdered."

The mystery of the murder at the oak tree was one which had grown old in the Soldiers' Belt. More than a quarter of a century before, a gentleman came to Millersburg, a stranger, who said that he was an agent for some land-owners, and was looking up their lands and examining their titles. A couple of days after his arrival he hired a horse and rode into the country some distance to see a farmer. It was dusk when he left the farmer's house to return to Millersburg. He was never seen alive again. The horse came back to the stable at midnight, and the next morning the stranger's body was found near the foot of the oak tree. It had been pierced by a bullet, and was stripped of all valuables and of everything that would have served to identify him. The conclusion was at once reached that a robber had hid behind the oak until his unsuspecting victim passed

and then had shot and robbed him. But a few years later some boys, while fishing in the creek near by, drew out a gold watch and chain, which were identified as having belonged to the stranger.

This discovery threw doubt over the theory that he had been murdered for the purpose of robbery. But who the assassin was, continued to be a profound mystery.

After Helen and Sammy reached home, and the former had told about the strange meeting at the little bridge, Colonel Hungerford took Sammy to one side and asked him who the man was.

"The man that we've been trailing," was the reply.

"Where do you think they were going?"

"I don't know, but the old road leads to Coalville Station."

"And the train for the East passes there at ten o'clock?"

"Yes."

"They were going to take it?"

"Quite likely; they must have wanted to do something pretty bad, or they would not have been out in such a storm as this. There are not many such volunteer fools as I have been to-night. Helen thought the storm was grand, but when the forked lightning is sizzling your eyebrows and making your hair stand on end, I don't see anything grand about it. I'm not pitched so high as that."

On the afternoon of that same day Captain Clingman drew a thousand dollars from the Farmer's Bank at Millersburg.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT THE FAMILY THOUGHT OF THE SERMON.

IT was Sunday, and Colonel Hungerford's family, according to their usual custom, had attended church at Millersburg; and, as the custom of Christendom is, were discussing the sermon and the preacher. For next to a candidate for the presidency, the Protestant preacher is the most discussed person in the country. From the fading or unfading luster on the velvet collar of his over-coat to the blacked or unblacked toe of his shoe, he is an object of minute and thorough-going investigation, and of particular, pungent and persistent remark. Whether he puts his hands in his pockets or the pockets of his parishioners; whether he parts his hair on the right or left side, in the middle or not at all, or nature parts it for him on a wholesale plan; whether he wears a frock coat or a cutaway, a swallow-tail, or a new coat or old coat, a smile, a solemn look, a long face, a silk hat or a slouch hat; whether he flatters his hearers or frightens them, flounders through his sermons or flies to eagle heights of eloquence, preaches

from the Bible, Herbert Spencer or George Eliot, and directs his sermons to his congregation or the newspapers; he is a man to be talked about, talked up and talked down, talked into a pulpit and out of it, according to the varying moods of that part of the public which seeks to be entertained in sacred places, and of the man who manages the finances of the church, and measures the minister by the money there is in him, and of the good sisters who lead the gossip at sewing meetings. To add to the interest on this occasion, the preacher of the day was a candidate. For the Millersburg pulpit was vacant, and the church had been having a long procession of candidates. As the salary was \$2,500 a year, Providence was readily interpreted by a host of men as pointing in that direction. They came thick and fast, from the gray-haired man who had lived long enough to be humble in the presence of the problems of eternity, to the young graduate who jostled Moses out of place and pulled the Psalms down the ages as freely as children knock down block houses.

"He is a brilliant preacher," said Mrs. Hungerford. "That certainly was a beautiful picture which he drew of worship in the woods and fields, by streams and hedges, where the trees talk of God, and birds and brooks sing praises. But I did not like the idea. It seems to me that the

church is the best place for worship, that if a man does not like to go to the house of God, he will not go to the woods to worship, whatever else may take him there. What do you think, Helen?"

"I should like to hear what Sammy thinks," was the reply. "I like to know how a sermon strikes boys in these days. For they will soon be the men, and at the helm, or pillars in the church."

"I liked the sermon," said Sammy, after some hesitation. "It's a nice idea, that of going to the woods. When you slip down to the creek to fish a while on a Sunday afternoon, it's a good thing to have a man as smart as that young preacher to make you believe it's all right. And the music down there sounds better than it does in church. I would lots rather hear the birds warble than a choir wobble through a hard anthem; and you don't have to put anything into the contribution box to pay the bill. When you get seated on a log and are waiting for the fish to bite, it's comforting to think that it's just as pious as to be in a church pew listening to a man who is fishing for your soul; and if a red bird perches on a limb over your head and whistles like a heavenly cherub, it is better than a wailing solo from a soprano who has a cold. I should say this minister understands a boy's internal system, and I hope they will call him."

"I hope they won't," said the colonel, "for the boys would all soon be out of the church and the fish out of the creek."

"The kind of preaching which makes it easy for a boy to get around his conscience," said Mrs. Hungerford, "makes it hard for him to get to heaven. You want to go to heaven, don't you, Sammy?"

"Yes, ma'am, but not right away."

After laughing, Helen said, "You want to take the lightning express."

"Yes, and a Pullman sleeper."

"You will have to engage your berth early, then, for the sleepers on that road are all crowded these days."

"They do seem to be. Deacon Posewell would have slept all through the sermon if a fly had not made it his business to roam around over his shiny head. When I see a fly on a bald head it makes me think of a man in search of the north pole—he is up at the extreme edge of civilization."

"You mean that a bald head represents the extreme of civilization?"

"That is what John Clingman said the other day when he was talking to a bald-headed jury."

"Never mind about that, Sammy," said the colonel. "But what did you think, Helen, about the mistakes of Moses?"

"Poor Moses!" she replied. "It may have been a mistake for him to think that he ever lived at all. Certainly it was a mistake for him to be born before the present generation of critics came into the world. There is much that they could have told him."

"He said that he was slow of speech, and he must have been very slow, for we are told now that it was several centuries after he was dead before his last words were uttered."

"Moses has had the misfortune of always being out of date," said the colonel. "He is out of date now. Your smart men of affairs now wouldn't write the Ten Commandments as Moses wrote them."

"How would they write them?" asked Mrs. Hungerford.

"Oh, something after this fashion:

"Thou shalt have no other gods but gold.

"Thou shalt not bow down to anything but success.

"Thou shalt remember the Sabbath day to keep all thy accounts, to go on a journey, and to give strict heed to all thy small affairs.

"Thou shalt honor thy first parents, the baboon and the ape.

"Thou shalt not be found out.

"Thou shalt not be poor.

"Thou shalt not steal, unless thou hast much money.

"Thou shalt not be out of fashion.

"Thou shalt not covet everything that is thy neighbor's unless thou art in a trust."

"But didn't Christ abrogate the law?"

"No, except as the little oak abrogates the shell of the acorn out of which it springs."

"It is strange," said Helen, "that so many think the law set aside, when Christ said that it was more eternal than the stars; and strange too that they think it so exacting when there is nothing so exacting as the law of love. Love commands us to do things that no other law does—to leap into the water to save the drowning, to rush into a burning building to rescue the inmates, to watch with the sick through nights of weariness and pain, to die for country, and go to the ends of the earth for savages and cannibals.

"It is said, 'Preach love, not law,' and it is right. But no sword cuts like the genuine preaching of love. I should rather hear the thunder-tones of Sinai all day, than to have love whisper its great claims into my ear for a moment."

CHAPTER VI.

LINDELL NORWIN AND HIS MOTHER EXCHANGE OPINIONS ABOUT WOMAN.

ON an afternoon of the same week Lindell Norwin entered his apartments in New York, drew up the window shades and began to look over the letters which had accumulated upon his table. He was just back from Europe, where he had spent several months in literary work, and for this reason had not received Colonel Hungerford's letter regarding the claims against his land. When he had read the letter he said, "I must attend to this matter at once."

Another letter was from his mother. It was as follows:

"**MY DEAR LINDELL:**

"I want this letter to greet you when you first set foot on your native shore. In my thoughts I have followed you night and day across the sea, praying against wind and storm, and spiriting you homeward on the wings of a mother's faith and love. The ocean never seemed so wide as when it rolled between my only boy and his mother, and the little fleecy clouds which floated across the field never before meant so much, for I thought

that they might turn to storms and strike across your path.

"We shall want you to come home at once and let us see you, and you will excuse a mother's pride, if I say I want you to be seen. Now that you are succeeding so well, it will mean something for us all. Boys back from the big battle in the great world make happy mothers. Miss Hungerford has been home from college for several weeks. It may be that I am over-proud of her because she is home-grown, one of our own girls; but my admiration for her is great. I think you would interest her greatly now that you have seen so much of the world, and are acquiring a literary reputation. She has, however, one very devoted admirer. I have always feared that your path and his would cross some day. Why, I know not, except as future events flash their intimations into our minds long beforehand. But do, dear boy, come home soon, and let your father and mother get a little good of you.

YOUR LOVING MOTHER."

"I ought to go a thousand miles to make even one happy day for such a mother," he said. "For I never should have got away to college had it not been for her. I shall write her at once."

And so he wrote:

"I shall come as soon as possible, dear mother, but to see you, not the little girl who is now so charming in your sight. I have seen womanhood in the great cities of the world, and you must not think that I am now looking at Helen through the same eyes that I once shaded with a palm leaf hat while I hunted wild flowers for her in the mead-

ows. The world soon rubs off school-day attachments. Seeing so many handsome faces makes one little face that hid timidly away in the depths of a sunbonnet seem a very small factor in life.

"I suppose that for a young woman a particular young man may often be necessary to happiness. If she misses him she misses her main chance. But with a young man it is not so. He can go on to wealth, political power, or literary success, even if he does miss a Helen or Mildred and finally falls back on a Susie or Daisy."

"Besides, woman seems to be approaching a new era, and I do not know just what she is going to be, whether a public leader with a big name and a little husband following after her, a kind of Atlas carrying the world on her shoulders, or a creature of fashion with a poodle under her arm. But I do know that if she is to have all the importance, I do not want to be the little man who will get lost in her shadow. A man who wants to set all the world to rights is uncomfortable company, but to have a woman for a wife who thought it as easy to reform all creation as to do a washing, would be an every-day, in-door and out-door affliction which my constitution, tough as it is, would not bear."

When Lindell finished this letter, he went to a drawer and took out a little album and looked at a photograph which his mother had begged from Mrs. Hungerford, but lost and could never find. Before he put it away again he was sensible that his new bravado had not yet put out all the old fire that burnt in his breast when a boy.

In a few days he received a reply from his mother, in which she said:

"Your father laughs at your professed alarm over the coming of the new woman. He thinks there will always be enough of the old woman to poke a fire on top, praise the preachers, run after new fads and keep open the channels of information in the neighborhood.

"New woman or old woman, her question of state will always be, how-withal shall we be clothed?

"But your father is cynical, and for my part I think that there is a womanhood which is always new, because it is beautiful and true. This has been a woman's century, and if she wants to make its last years the greatest, why object?

"But don't think, my dear boy, that it makes little difference whether it is a Helen or Susie, or Polly or Peggy. A bad choice of a wife could bring you more misery than a big success in literature will bring you happiness.

"There is a tone about this kind of talk which shows that while the world is developing some of your faculties, it may be putting a crust over other faculties whose growth is equally essential to a noble manhood."

TROUBLESONE TITLES.

Two weeks later Lindell wrote to Colonel Hungerford explaining his long delay in regard to his request concerning the Jones signature to his title. He said that since his return he had given it much personal attention, that he had found the executor of the Jones will, and they went through

his papers and records and discovered that the wife of Jones died a month before he sold the property and made the deed, and that he did not marry again. Why there was a wife's signature in the transfer of Captain Clingman's section he did not know, unless because there were so many Joneses in New York that two of them might have had the same given name, and both have owned land in the West.

He had also discovered that there were some Jones heirs who believed that they were entitled to some property near Millersburg, but as his own title was all right he did not follow up the other matter.

Colonel Hungerford felt much relieved by this letter, but after explaining its contents to his wife, lapsed into a long silence.

"What is it, my dear?" she said at length.

"I don't know. I don't understand it all. Our title seems all right, but there seems to be something wrong somewhere. There are straws here and there which point to something, but what I can't tell."

"And I don't understand why the man left so suddenly. He has not been seen since the day of the storm. He said that he was going to enter suit at once, and had retained Judge Barrier as his counsel. But I have heard nothing more about it."

"I am glad," said Mrs. Hungerford, "that we can breathe freely again about this home place. I felt the more uneasy because of what happened when I was a girl. Before we came west we had two neighbors who dealt in western lands. They soon became rich, built new houses, drove fine horses, and lived in great style. The men were gone much of the time, but always spent the summer months with their families.

"One day, as one of them drove up to the post-office in a stylish turnout, a sunburnt, rough-looking man stepped up to him and placed him under arrest. He was a western sheriff and produced a warrant charging our neighbor with forging deeds to vacant lands in his state. As it transpired afterwards, these two men had for several years been engaged in looking up lands whose owners lived in other states, forging deeds to them and then selling them at a low price. It was believed that they had accomplices in all the counties where they operated, either among the officials or land sharks. But they had covered up their tracks so well that conviction was difficult, and only this one man was sent to the penitentiary. The other neighbor was captured in the West while disposing of a piece of stolen land, but afterwards escaped from jail, and was never heard of again. There was a rumor, however, that his pursuers could have

told where he was, that a western court, extemporized in the woods, had disposed of his case after a very short session.

"After that there was always some suspicion in our family of western titles."

"Did you ever hear your father say in what counties these men operated?" asked Colonel Hungerford.

"No, I did not. I was young and did not interest myself in the details. I remember their handsome carriages and spotted coach dog, which went by our house so often, better than I do the names of the western towns and places where their crimes were committed."

The colonel arose and walked the floor so long that his wife left him to his meditations, and retired.

CHAPTER VII.

HELEN CALLS A HALT.

A WESTERN farm country is wanting in the picturesqueness of the East. Prairies resolutely flat, or rising and falling in broad undulations which sweep beyond the blue of the horizon, lack something of the charm of hills which gather up the green of the foliage and unfurl it in the sky, or draw down white clouds and throw the fleecy drapery over their shoulders; and of snug little valleys which catch the sunlight like golden bowls and are full of laughing and loving flowers, while the waters of the brooks splash over the stones and fill the little court with music.

But the West has its own beauty. When its boundless prairies are clothed with fields of corn, green, great and strong, and harvested grain, standing in long rows of shocks, while pretty white houses peep through clumps of maples or tall poplars, and neatly trimmed hedges bound rich pasture fields, the scene presented is one of the greatness and glory of earth's spaces, richly dowered, covered with plenty, full of beauty for the eye and

blessings for the body, a vast intimation of wealth, of happy homes, of towns and cities, colleges, and a nation's strength. It is a picture which not only salutes the eye of the artist, but which promises to feed and clothe the household, to send boys and girls to college, and to lay up comfort and plenty for old age.

It was while Mrs. Hungerford and Helen were taking an afternoon drive along one of these hedge-bound highways, the blue sky arched high above, and the sunlight touching the whole land with a glow of splendor, that the latter said:

"Mother, don't you think that Mr. Clingman is calling pretty often and staying rather late?"

The mother looked surprised, not because this question is usually put the other way between mother and daughter, but for other reasons.

"Perhaps he is," she replied, "but you know that we have always been fond of him, and greatly admire him."

"Yes, I know, mamma, and there is so much reason for it. For he is so very admirable, so quick, so brilliant, with such a constant flash of intelligence in his face and such a wealth of words to express his thoughts. I never met a man who understood so well as he the picturesque in phraseology. And at heart he seems to be good. But—"

"But what, my dear?"

"Well, mamma, to be frank, and say it right out, I think it means marriage."

"So does womanhood, for that matter. It is an old story, Helen. But has Mr Clingman proposed?"

"No, mamma, but we know that day is coming before the sun walks over the high eastern hills; and love makes the sky a little bit rosy before it proclaims itself openly."

"Well, when the birds see the rosy fingers of light reach up into the eastern sky, they salute them with their songs. Is there a bird singing in your heart?"

Helen turned her head away and looked across the field at the drivers loading shocks of wheat for the threshing machine which was humming merrily at a neighboring barn. When she felt that the little flame had left her cheek, she looked into her mother's handsome face and said:

"I do not want to marry now, you and papa are so good, and I have all that I need in home and comfort. Besides, I have my theory about life, and it does not lead straight to orange blossoms and the altar."

"But, my dear daughter, the Lord made man and woman before men and women made theories, and I have more faith in the old instincts than I do in the new theories. I should not like to see you accept or dismiss a man on a theory. But

let your heart settle the case on his merits. Theories are better for speculation than for practice. A woman's headlight is her heart. Of course, she can't see around all the curves with it, but if she keeps it well trimmed, she can see further than with any other light."

"A woman's heart sometimes makes much trouble for her, mamma."

"I know all that. But a good authority has said, 'Out of the heart are the issues of life.' It is not the heart that causes the ruin generally, but the way in which it is kept, or rather not kept.

"If girls leave their hearts on the front door-steps there is no telling what tramp will carry them off. But wise girls keep them under lock and key."

"Yes, but they fall in love, and then do all sorts of foolish things. Is love a good guide?"

"God is love, and he makes no mistakes. It is not love that girls fall into when they make such sad mistakes and do such foolish things, but passion, impatience, self-will, vanity and all the brood of hurtful things which nestle under pride. But what is your theory, Helen?"

"I have been told so often, mamma, that I am handsome that I suppose I ought to believe it. I have been the object of much admiration and many flattering remarks, but am I to consider my

attractions and my success in college only so much advantage for making a good marriage? Is a woman beautiful, talented and cultured only to be married? I come home and straightway the most popular marriageable man in the region is my devoted admirer. But is all to go for just this one man? I enjoy his coming. The hours go as quickly for me, perhaps, as for him. I think we both hate to hear the clock strike. But I should like to have what I am, and have acquired, do something more than catch a husband. Why should not a woman think of her attractions as a means of making the world better instead of just bettering her own prospects? What draws this man towards me would draw the wretched and miserable, and give me power to inspire them and help them upward. You have quoted the Bible; let me quote Paul: 'I am debtor to the Greeks and to the barbarians.' I feel the same way—that I am debtor not to interesting people only, but to the barbarians who fill the world with their sins and sorrows. And I am debtor for all that I am in grace to influence and power to mold into a better image.

"The Greeks wrought in marble, words and phrases. We, twenty centuries further up the scale of civilization, work on human souls.

"In a word, mother, an educated, wealthy farm-

er's only daughter ought to think herself cut out for much usefulness in the world. Rationalistic people, who are always ashamed of a Bible idea unless they can give it some other name, call this altruism, but it is the heart idea of Christianity. The good that you can do to others is your debt to others. If you are born beautiful your debt is greater than if plain. If you are educated you owe more than the ignorant. If you get rich you get into deeper debt. There was one man whom the Prince of gentleness called a fool. He was the man who increased his barns instead of his usefulness."

"Your theory is good, my darling, excellent, but there is a difference between a man's influence and that of a woman. The basis of a man's influence is his success in his calling. The basis of a woman's influence is her husband. Perhaps that is putting it a little strong, but we usually have to overstate principles to state them at all.

"Let a woman marry a man of success and influence, and her words and ways count in the community. What the wife of the Hon. Mr. So and So says, goes, even if she is commonplace and disjointed subjects and predicates. She is put on committees and at the head of movements. Of course, if she is handsome and brilliant it helps, but the basis of it all is her husband's position. I am not saying that it ought to be so, but that it is

so, and that if you want to be an influence for good in the world, a man of brilliant professional success will be a high tower to stand on."

"The word is," said Helen laughingly, "that woman is a door-mat for a man, and here you are saying that the husband is standing ground for the wife."

"Yes, but there is a good deal of difference between a tower and a door-mat."

"I understand, mamma; but suppose that I should want to do more good than my husband, but in a different way, then there would be a hitch and a drawback. One who would do good in this world must not be explaining to and reasoning with somebody in the rear all the time. There are enough of obstacles in front, without anybody to work the hold-back straps. My observation is that husbands are apt to put on the brakes when wives are pulling up-hill, and the wives put them on when the husbands are running down-hill. I do not want to be held back, or have a husband to hold back."

"That is well enough, Helen, but remember that a yoke is not for slavery, but to draw burdens. Oxen without yokes would plow no fields, drag no harrows, haul no grists to mill. Say what you will about the yoke of matrimony, it has drawn the greatest burdens up the steepest hills ever trod-

den by human feet. However great or small we consider the progress of the race, it has been a man and wife progress. One good man yoked to one good woman is the strongest team on earth."

"You are a dear good mother, and papa is such a dear good man that I do not wonder that you think the yoke easy and the burden light, and with you in the afternoon and Mr. Clingman in the evening I begin to feel a little alarmed. But then—"

"I am talking for general principles, not for the gentleman who calls so often. However, Helen, when you are deeply in love there will be no 'but'. A woman's heart is bigger than all the theories in the world."

"Suppose that this should prove a heart affair, mamma, I do not want to marry now. I have my heart set on another year of study; then I want to go abroad for a year. One needs to see as well as read about things. Travel is study on the wing, and all the faculties gather knowledge on the way."

"But, my daughter, marriage waits on such things. Engagements are elastic as to time, but not as to loyalty, and they have their own pleasant fancies. There is something in thinking while the rain is patterning on the roof and making the corn grow in the fields, or the wild fowls are uttering their cry on the way southward, or the

winter winds are whistling through the trees and moaning around the house, that your heart has its haven fixed, and that by and by the clock will strike the hour of the great event."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONGRESSIONAL CONVENTION AT HAND.

THE Congressional Convention was only three weeks away, but the tide was no longer all in one direction. The opposition to Colonel Hungerford had become more open and determined. A part of the press had arrayed itself strongly against him, and as usual on such occasions, published a dozen more lies while the friends of the colonel were trying to stop the first. But the body of the voters were with him, and there was no fear of his defeat for the nomination.

"We must do something," said Captain Clingman as he walked with young Culverwell over to his son's law office. "It is now or never with Jack." The latter was hastily putting away the papers in a case in which he had been absorbed since early morning.

"Were you going out?" asked his father.

"Yes, I'm tired and shall take a drive into the country. Are the girls at home?"

"My girls are, but I don't know about some other girls."

"What is yours is mine, and that is enough."

"But, Jack, I am tired too."

"Tired of what, father?"

"Tired trying to heal this growing split in the party. It is making a bad prospect for us."

"Do you think it as bad as that?"

"Yes, I do. This is an off year, which this time means off to the Democratic party. We must have a candidate who will poll the full vote of our party or we shall be beaten, and that Colonel Hungerford cannot do."

"Who can, then?"

"You," said both at once, with much emphasis.

"I don't know about that, but I do know that I shall not pit myself against Colonel Hungerford. While he is a candidate I shall not be. A man under thirty does not need to run an old friend, and a good man, off the track to get to Congress. He can afford to wait."

"But what if he should withdraw?" said Tom. "What if, realizing the bitterness of the split, and the danger of disaster to the party, he should conclude to step aside for the sake of harmony?"

"That would be another matter. He has always been a very loyal party man, but a man who fought through the war for peace is not just the kind to surrender or beat a retreat for peace. Anyhow, I don't like this."

"Your attachment for the colonel is undoubtedly very great," said Tom with a wink, "but you would like to go to Congress, wouldn't you?"

"Why, I suppose so. Most young lawyers want to be statesmen and make history; and it is natural for them to want to make laws. They know better then where the loopholes are when they have to help you sinners out of bad scrapes, or rich corporations to get over the bars. A lawyer to make the law, a lawyer to outlaw the law; a judge to see the technicalities of the law, and not the law itself, what is to keep the big fellows, who can hire all the big lawyers, from getting decisions to suit them? Oh, yes, I should like to be a law-maker. But Colonel Hungerford is in command of the regiment this time, and I have hardly even been in the ranks."

"A camp follower, as it were," said Tom, with another wink.

"Anything, Tom, just so that it suits you, and you let me get away for some fresh air."

"But, Jack, this is serious business," said his father. "You are the man who can unite the party; everybody knows that. The farmers like you, and the townspeople like you. We want you to think it over carefully."

"I may, but don't go away and say that I am in the hands of my friends, for that means that a man is humping himself with all his might to get a nomination.

"Get in and ride with me, father, and let Tom drive the other team," said the young lawyer as they went out.

"No, Jack, I don't like to ride after your sorrels, they step too high, it makes me feel giddy. We old fellows like a pair of horses that hang their heads in sober second thought, and jog along as if they were trying to postpone the inevitable. Our gray hairs tell us that we will be at the end of the journey soon enough anyhow. Tell your mother that I shall be along in good time."

"Captain," said Tom, when Jack was gone, "you always fall into sentiment when you have a political scheme on hand."

"Sentiment is a power in politics as well as it is in everything else."

"If that is the case, Jack is feeling sentimental enough now to run the congressional race like a scared wolf. But what now?"

"You must see Colonel Hungerford right away and try to get him to withdraw. Don't say anything to him about a split in the party, but make a personal appeal on the ground of what no other man in the world did for him but you."

CULVERWELL RECALLS A CRITICAL MOMENT.

The next afternoon Colonel Hungerford met Culverwell by appointment in a little side parlor of the Millersburg hotel.

Culverwell began with the crops, then became reminiscent, talked over war experiences and went over the battle-ground of Gettysburg again, now pausing at Culp's Hill, then at Little Round Top, and at the fatal Peach Orchard, and again going through the terrific cavalry charge. It was like smelling the smoke of battle, and riding into the jaws of death again. The colonel's eyes flashed and his breast heaved with the pride of victory, as he again saw Pickett's brave forty thousand beaten, broken and swept back over the wide plain.

"It was a glorious battle," he exclaimed, "glorious for both sides, if one was defeated. For only American freemen could have fought the two sides to such a battle. Think of the long run to it, and the three days' deadly struggle."

"But, you, if you had not been such a brave boy, I should not be here to talk about it to-day. I never have done half enough to repay you."

"But you can now, colonel," said Culverwell, with a serious look and solemn tone. "I have met you here because I have a favor to ask. You know how much Captain Clingman has done for me. He sent me away to school for two years; then, when I enlisted, he got you elected major and me lieutenant. When I came home, he gave me a start, and now I am making money fast. But

all I have I owe to him. And now he has set his heart on Jack's going to Congress, and we all want to see him there. He is the pride of the whole Clingman connection. We think that he has a great future before him, that he is the coming man, and we want to see him get started before some big railroad company offers him a princely salary and takes him away from us. If ever he goes to a great city and is making money hand over fist he is lost to this congressional district.

"That you can get the nomination, we know, but if you withdraw, the way is clear for him. You think you owe me a debt, though I do not; I owe the Clingmans; suppose we discharge both debts at one stroke by your withdrawing. What do you say?"

"I don't say," replied the colonel, with a shrug of the shoulder. "But I'll think it over," he added, rising and turning toward the door.

The conference ended and Colonel Hungerford went home.

"This is a queer mixture of politics, gratitude, ambition and scheming," he said to himself on the way home.

"It is another case of Herodias and her daughter, with a change of sex; only that Herodias asked for another man's head, but in this case they ask me for my own head. Captain Clingman is back of it, and Tom is a tool."

The troubled look on the colonel's face at the supper table was regarded by his wife with anxiety, and she was not long in seeking an explanation.

"They want me to withdraw from the congressional race," was his reply to her question.

"Who do you mean by 'they'?"

"Tom Culverwell, for one. You know what he did for me at Gettysburg; and when he reached the regiment again, after escaping, wounded and worn out, from the enemy, and the men took him up on their shoulders and carried him to my tent, I caught him in my arms and told him that if ever he wanted me to do anything for him, I would do it. And now he wants me to drop out of the contest."

"Why?"

"Because Captain Clingman and himself have interests that they want to protect by the election of another man."

"But who do they want to put in your place?" asked Mrs. Hungerford, in a tone that betrayed agitation.

"John Clingman."

A strange look came over Mrs. Hungerford's face, but in a calmer tone she said:

"You are not going to withdraw, are you?"

"For Tom's sake I suppose I ought to do so.

They say of me, ‘His word is as good as his bond,’ and I gave my word to him when the blood of battle was upon our garments. A promise made when the ground is torn with shot and shell and the wounded and unburied dead are all around you, and the bravest of the living stand by, becomes a solemn covenant which time cannot annul. If Lieutenant Culverwell had not sprung between me and that descending saber I should have been one of the dead that strewed that bloody field, and you would have been a widow and Helen an orphan.”

“A son and husband would have been more than I could bear. But it is hard for you to be asked to step aside from an honor which seems so easily within your reach; and the man who was such a hero in battle that day seems a very different man now as one of a ring of political schemers.”

“I know that; politics drags men down, and for that reason I should not regret to get out of the whole business. When a man becomes a candidate, he almost ceases to be a man. He is waylaid by his enemies and plucked by his friends. One side robs him of his good name, and the other of his cash. I have been called on to give so much money right and left that now, when one of my horses lifts up his head and neighs as he sees me coming, I find myself just on the point of asking him how much he wants.

"I used to think that I was a pretty good sort of a man, but now between the two sides I begin to think that I shall land either in the penitentiary or the poorhouse.

"I knew how to lead a regiment, and how to fight an enemy that stood straight up in battle, but these creeping, crawling, slippery, slimy creatures in politics, I don't know how to fight them. I tell you, wife, it makes me loathe the whole business."

"But somebody must stand for principle and good government."

"I know it, and that was my only reason for going into the thing at all."

"Do you think John Clingman is in this movement to have you withdraw?"

"No, they have filled him with talk about a split in the party and the loss of the district if there is not a compromise, but he does not know what means they are using to get me to withdraw, and I shall not tell him. If I step out he is certainly the only man who can be elected, and I can hardly help believing that with his rare ability he would be more influential than I could be. But how he stands towards the corporations is something that I do not feel so sure of. The farmers, however, have much confidence in him."

"He seems to be on our side," said Mrs. Hungerford with a smile.

CHAPTER IX.

IF WOMEN SHALL VOTE.

A FEW days later the Millersburg papers announced that Colonel Hungerford had declined to permit his name to come before the congressional nominating convention, greatly to the regret of his hosts of friends. When the convention assembled, John W. Clingman was nominated without much opposition, the railroad faction throwing a few votes to another man to allay suspicion among the farmers.

A neighbor boy said to Sammy Suddendrop, as they sat under a tree in the orchard, each eating his seventh or eighth apple, that he was sorry the colonel was not going to Congress, but he supposed it would be all in the family anyhow. Sammy replied that he was mad all over about it, and hoped that Jack Clingman would be beaten in both races. He would like to see all the farmers and one farmer's daughter go back on him.

Just then Helen came tripping down the path, looking more beautiful than ever under a broad

summer hat, her hair thrown loosely over her shoulders and a great bunch of sweet peas pinned on her bosom.

"What was that you were saying about voting, Sammy?" she asked.

"I wish I could make everybody vote as I want them to," he replied.

"You are not the first one to wish that, but men go right on voting as they please. Perhaps you think the voting will never be done right until women have a hand in it."

"That wouldn't do any good. Women don't know anything about politics.

"If a man as handsome as Jack Clingman kissed their babies, praised their daughters, and called for two pieces of their cake at a Sunday-school picnic or church festival, they would vote for him all the rest of his life. They would be sixteen to one for him, whatever became of silver, tariffs or railroad rates. He wouldn't have to get up big speeches at all, or burn any midnight oil, but just oil his hair, part it in the middle, put on a red necktie, black his boots and start out with a sweet look in his eye, a wide smile on his lips, and a little honey on his tongue, and he would catch them all. The women would ding-dong at their old men to vote for him, and the girls would tell their sweethearts to vote for him, and he would go in by forty thousand majority.

"It will be a great day for dudes when women get to voting and apron-strings are the pull. Statesmen won't be in it, and solemn-faced and gray-haired wisdom will have to colonize at the head waters of Salt River."

"But don't you think, Sammy, that the women would turn the rascals out?"

"Certainly, turn them out of jail, where they carry them bouquets and nice things to eat. The trouble is, you can't make a woman believe a man is a rascal unless he tells her that she is growing old, and sharpers don't do that."

"But, Sammy, you will have to ask at least one young woman to vote some day. Are you going to play dude to win?"

"No. I'll play my fiddle under her window, and then ask her to join the band."

"I think she would join. But what would you do if the man of the house mistook you for a burglar trying to saw his way into the window, and appeared upon the scene with a shotgun?"

"I'd strike up a funeral march. But, Helen, I'm mad about that congressional business. The colonel is the best man in all the world, and ought to have been elected."

"I don't like the turn affairs have taken, myself," said Helen, while the smile that had been playing across her face gave place to a look of severity which surprised Sammy.

"I'll bet," he said, when she had taken some apples and returned to the house, "that he'll find her vote the hardest of all to get."

A FAIR JURY BUT DISAPPOINTING VERDICT.

When John Clingman made his first call after his nomination, Helen received him with her usual grace, but there was a slight shadow of reserve in her manner which he could not wholly believe was mere imagination on his part.

But its recognition only quickened his eagerness to bring matters to a crisis, an eagerness that became more intense as he soon felt the old sense of helplessness under the spell of her attractions.

"I have no doubt you will be very busy now," she said during the evening, "with so stirring a campaign on your hands, and so many speeches to make."

"Indeed I shall, and I am trying to get all my cases in court in good shape before I start on the round of speech-making. But there is one case that gives me not a little concern. There are precedents and law enough for it, but I have had no practice of the kind and it perplexes me." He said this with a look at Helen so quizzical and so earnest that she was slightly agitated, and for a moment toyed with her fan.

"What troubles me most," he continued with

the same uneasiness, "is to know how to handle the jury."

"I thought that handling a jury was your special talent, Mr. Clingman. I have heard much about the power of your eloquence over them; how you make them laugh and weep, and see things all your own way."

"That is a jury of twelve, but a jury of one is different."

"But it is against the law to try a case before a jury of one," she said, assuming a defensive air.

"That is true of a case against another man, but when it is your own case, and you are willing to submit to a *fair* judge, it is all right."

Helen observed the emphasis on the word "fair," and said nothing.

The young lawyer wished that she had said something, for he was at a sore loss to know what to say next.

Finally he said: "Helen, I am willing to submit the case to you." She rose, went to the window and fanned herself with a deliberation that was not encouraging. Then turning toward him, she replied: "Mr. Clingman, I have little knowledge of law or precedents in such a case, and I am afraid that you have appealed to a poor tribunal."

"But there is no other," he said with deep ear-

nestness. "I have admired you from your childhood; I have seen you unfold into beautiful and brilliant womanhood and—and—lost my heart."

He had risen and was standing close beside her, and as she turned toward him with flushed face she seemed to him radiantly beautiful.

"Have you no word to say?" he asked, "or shall I put the old interpretation on your silence?"

"No, Mr. Clingman, my silence is not an answer. How can I speak the word that you want? I have my life planned for two years ahead, and the plan does not include another. But most of all, I do not feel that I know you sufficiently well. In the former years I was a child and took little note of character, then in school and absorbed in books, and now I am just free to look about and think. But you are a man of professional success; you know people and the world, and you have been named for a high honor. You are already a leader among men, and seem so far beyond a mere school-girl. You are in politics, and what effect that has had, or may have on you, I don't know; and to be frank, you can hardly know yourself. But I feel somewhat troubled over what happened to my father. You can understand me if I say that I think there is something very uncertain and very exasperating in political affairs. If my aspirations in life were to be hinged on nomi-

nating conventions I am afraid that there would be many disappointments."

Helen felt that it was a manly face that had suddenly become so pale, and she was deeply moved when he said in a husky tone:

"Helen, I know that I have offered you my heart, that in love and judgment you are the one woman who answers to my ideal of a life companion; you inspire me, you teach me, and make me better."

"I admire you, Mr. Clingman, and no man that I ever met brought to me so much that I enjoy in conversation and friendship. But for the present let us only be friends."

"The present might prolong itself into eternity."

"For two years I shall be as I am now. We shall know ourselves and each other better then; and in the meantime you will be very busy. In fact, I am almost afraid that you will forget to call on me."

"And this means no promise?"

"No, Mr. Clingman, only that I shall say no more to another in the two years than I have said to you, and I know that I shall not cease to admire you, and to follow you in your public career with deep interest. And you will still be a friend?"

"I shall," he replied in a subdued tone. Then he looked at her long and earnestly, said good-night, and went away.

Helen stood at the door watching him until he disappeared in the darkness, then she retired and sobbed herself to sleep, wishing that it had not happened.

John Clingman went home wishing too that it had not happened, and saying over and over to himself that it would not have come out just that way if he had not taken the honor which seemed to belong to Colonel Hungerford.

"Helen is in doubt about my part in that matter," he said, "and she is going to await developments. She shall have proof enough of my friendship to her father."

But Helen's real thought was that she had followed her head more than her heart. She had made her inclinations yield to her purposes.

The next week Helen left for an eastern college, and they did not meet again until after her return from Europe two summers later.

CHAPTER X.

A SUDDEN SET-BACK.

"ARE you going to wave the bloody shirt in your campaign speeches?" asked Judge Barrier as he dropped into a chair in John Clingman's private office.

"No, indeed," was the reply. "What is the use of fighting the war over again? It will neither raise the dead nor help the living. I fought the Confederates when the war was on. There is something else to fight now."

"What, for instance?"

"Let me ask you a question. Why does Colonel Hungerford lose money by his coal lands while others make money?"

"You'd better ask the colonel himself."

"I have asked him. He is in the dark. I am asking you now. You are not in the dark."

"If you were older, you would not ask such questions at all while running for office."

"Old in trickery, you mean?"

"Don't press the question, Jack; it comes too close home."

"But home questions are what I am after."

"Your father and Culverwell are not losing money, are they?"

"No, they are making money."

"Then take the hint and subside. You surely don't want to strike up against them, do you?"

"I have no wish to come in conflict with my father's interests, or Culverwell's either. But if the Clingmans and Culverwells can't make money without making their neighbors poor, they'd better not make money at all. Come now, Judge Barrier, let us get right down to the facts of the case. The railroad company gives them a rebate, don't it? And Colonel Hungerford has to pay the schedule rates? And they can always have cars when they want them, and he can't. Isn't that so?"

"You seem to be turning yourself into an investigating committee before you are elected. You'd better wait at least until you get to Washington."

"No, I shall not wait. Colonel Hungerford put a mortgage on a quarter section of his land the other day. I know what is the matter, and it has got to stop. You fellows are smooth and deep, but I tell you now that all the coal which the railroad company carries out of those Coal Creek mines must go at the same rates.

"If the company don't agree at once to stop its discriminations, you will hear of some speeches up

and down this district that you won't like. You can see the division superintendent and have the matter fixed."

"This is a brash piece of business, but I'll see him."

For some days Judge Barrier made himself invisible, and no word came from the division superintendent. But a week after the interview the man from New York, who had given Colonel Hungerford so much anxiety, asked John Clingman for a private interview.

"My business," he said, "is not of a pleasant character, Mr. Clingman, but it should receive your immediate attention. I am in possession of some facts that cannot be divulged without doing great damage to your prospects in the congressional campaign. But I am under no obligations to keep them secret and do not know that I shall unless it is made my interest to do so. Now you know matters that the railroad company don't want known; I know matters that you don't want known. You are a smart lawyer, smart enough to know that the best thing is to agree to keep still all around."

"What are your facts?"

"Oh, don't play the innocent; you know all about them."

"I have heard it hinted that you were paid a

thousand dollars not long ago. Is that a fact?"

"Yes, and I'll be paid several thousand more before I get through here. This is a rich lead."

Clingman rose from his seat, walked the floor, looked nervously at his visitor, and then threw off his coat, remarking that it was very warm.

The man turned his wicked little black eyes upon him and said with a sneer:

"It will be a geat deal hotter before this thing is all over with."

"Then I'll open the door and let in some more air," and flinging it wide open, he caught the man by the collar, and dragging him from his seat through the door, pitched him headlong downstairs.

"You will find it cooler out-doors," he said, as the fellow slowly picked himself up and hobbled away.

Late in the evening the man slipped into Judge Barrier's office, with several patches of court plaster on his face and a rheumatic limp in both legs.

"What is the matter," said the judge with a look of surprise. "How did it work?"

"Work?" exclaimed the man with a volley of oaths. "It worked—" and here he swore for another minute or two—"It worked like an old rusty cannon that explodes on a Fourth of July, and knocks the fellow over that touches it off."

"What did he do?" asked the judge, growing excited.

"Do? Why, the young scoundrel jumped on me as quick as a streak of blue lightning, and pitched me downstairs."

"He is a terror," exclaimed the judge, starting from his seat. "What in the name of Sam Hill ever made us nominate him for Congress?"

"He's worse than a kicking mule and a bucking mustang. The next time ask me to light a dynamite bomb with the end of my cigar, or do something else that's easy, but don't ask me to come from New York again to work Jack Clingman. I've talked to many a fellow in New York. They're soft like, and when they see that you have got them in a corner, they come down like lambs. But your fellows out here in the wild and woolly West don't have sense enough to know when you've got them in a corner, or how to smooth things over like gentlemen.

"But, judge, somebody has got to pay for this trip. It will take more than court plaster to cover all these bruises. Some of you fellows will have to spread it on thick."

There was a tap at the door, and when the judge opened it, John Clingman's office boy handed him a note. After reading it he said:

"This note is from Clingman; he says that if I don't send you back to New York he will send you to the penitentiary. You must take the next train."

"Not much, without some money."

"I can't give you any money. Go to the hotel and keep shady for a day or two."

When the man was gone Judge Barrier said to himself: "Jack Clingman can pitch people down-stairs all he wants to, but it will take some Clingman money to help pay the bill; and some of these fine days he will have to get off his high horse too. It is a long lane that has no turn."

Three days later John Clingman received a polite note from the division superintendent informing him that coal rates on all shipments from the Coal Creek mines would be reduced, and that he hoped to have enough cars for all shippers without delay. He also complimented him on the vigor with which he was conducting his campaign, and heartily wished him success.

A HUSTLER.

From that time until election day John Clingman was hardly seen in his office or on the streets of Millersburg. He realized that the time was short and that the contest would be close, and he threw himself into the campaign with an energy that surprised even the old neighbors, who had always thought him an amazing worker. Aware that there was some dissatisfaction in his own county over the displacement of Colonel Hunger-

ford, he took his chestnut-sorrels and hurried from one schoolhouse to another, everywhere meeting large audiences and winning golden opinions. With his slouch hat, old blouse coat and country air, he looked like the plough-boy of other days; and when he warmed up to his subject, threw open his shirt collar and pulled up his sleeves, the farmer boys went wild. "He goes at it as if he was pitching hay on a hot day," they exclaimed. "Hurrah for Jack!"

And the old men soon stopped grumbling and sulking and fell into line enthusiastically. They said that he was a farmer's boy, a soldier and a neighbor's son, and if they could not trust him, whom could they trust?

"There are three kinds of men," said an old wise head, "that make poor congressmen—the man that can be bought, the man that can be fooled, and the man that can be downed in debate. Jack Clingman is none of these. He can't be bought, fooled, or beat in debate."

In the large towns up and down the railroads the slouch hat and old blouse coat gave place to a suit of the latest style, and the young candidate excited almost as much admiration by his handsome personal appearance and elegant manners, as by his splendid logic and persuasive eloquence.

To only one class of persons was he disappoint-

ing. The ladies said that he was too shy. They didn't see why a man who was so much at home on the platform before all kinds of people couldn't be a little more at home in the parlor with a few mammas and daughters. They did not know that he had not yet recovered from a parlor experience.

When the darkness of night settled down on election day, and the returns began to come in, they looked bad for Clingman. The cities and towns were the first to report, and the word soon came that the railroad employés had scratched the ticket badly. His sisters, who had gathered around him, with a score of old schoolmates and neighbors, began to look sober.

"You didn't wave the bloody shirt enough," said a neighbor.

"You ought to have pitched into the dead Confederacy and fought the war over again."

"You didn't kiss enough of the babies," said Mildred.

"You didn't eat your pie with your knife when you were in the rural districts," exclaimed Daisy. "They thought you were stuck up."

"You walked past too many saloons," said another neighbor. "You will have to learn to drink and smoke before you try it again."

"You neglected the weather," said an old 'squire. "It was so dry that the farmers couldn't plow and they laid it on you."

"But you wait until we hear from the farmers," said Clingman, calmly. "When the country messengers begin to gallop into town, the tide will turn." And it did. By midnight the farmers' vote was coming in heavily from all parts of the district, and Clingman was soon neck and neck with his opponent. At two in the morning he had a safe majority, and his sisters congratulated him with kisses, a dozen or more pretty neighbor girls taking advantage of the excitement to do the same.

"You won't be too proud now to come out and see us, will you?" they shouted, as they climbed into their buggies and family carriages and drove away.

But there was one whom John Clingman sorely missed in the excitement of his triumph. However, the next day Colonel and Mrs. Hungerford came into his office and warmly congratulated him on his success. Among the many letters of congratulation was one from Helen, in which she highly complimented him for his brilliant campaign, and expressed the hope that he would find public life all that he had fondly anticipated.

John Clingman availed himself of this opportunity to begin a correspondence of which the regularity was sufficient proof of interest on both sides.

From Lindell Norwin also came a brief note of compliments and good wishes. At the same time

Lindell wrote to his much disappointed mother that his often deferred visit would have to be given up until relieved from the great pressure of his profession.

CHAPTER XI.

OFF TO EUROPE.

IN June of the following year Helen Hungerford and Mildred Clingman, in company with a few eastern friends, sailed from New York for Europe. The steamer went out on an evening tide. The passenger list was large and notable, and for an hour before sailing groups of friends, troops of merry young people, and smiling fathers and mothers, made the scene as exciting and confusing as it was enjoyable. Great bouquets and baskets of flowers were heaped upon the table of the saloon; there was a mingling of kisses, admonitions, laughter and tears. Young men and women, with the freedom of school-children, shouted their partings from deck to wharf. The whistle shrieked its warning; the bell struck; officers asserted themselves; sailors caught the ropes and tugged at the gang-plank; there was a tingling of little bells below; tugs snorted, stretched their big hawsers and pulled hard at the stern. The great steamship rocked, swung loose, backed into

the stream, turned slowly and laboriously in its water-bed, and then headed for the Atlantic and the Old World. Yachts with their white sails to light June breezes hurried out of the track, ferry boats dashed away to right and left, and incoming vessels whistled their greetings. The mighty city swung into the rear, the green hills of Staten Island lifted their well rounded forms into the twilight, Long Island presented arms, a rocket shot into the air, and then another, and the floating palace, winged with speed, and freighted with a thousand lives and hearts that throbbed with the pulse of its power, was ploughing its way through the deep.

When the dinner hour came and Helen and Mildred took up the passenger list which was laid at each plate, they turned to one another with a look, and almost a cry of surprise. Lindell Norwin's name was on the list, but the shy glances which they shot across the tables did not find him. They had not seen him for three years, and what with the possibilities of whiskers and increased dignity, they did not feel quite sure of recognizing him short of a face to face encounter.

But when dinner was over and they had gone upon deck, and were taking their first look at the little curling waves laughing and glistening in the moonlight, Lindell came briskly towards them.

"I have been hunting for you," he said. "I saw your names on the passenger list, and have given myself no peace until I found you."

There was so much of the old schoolboy manner in his approach that it closed the gap of years, brushed away changes, and made it all seem "just like old times," as Mildred expressed it.

In the mutual explanations which followed he told them that he was in company with a particular friend, a Mr. Stanvelt, who with his mother and sister was going directly to Paris, where the latter were to remain, while the two young gentlemen made a visit to Italy, Mr. Stanvelt stopping at the Lakes and he going on to Rome. For that reason, he said, they had taken a French liner.

In reply to his inquiries Helen told him that they would go from Havre to Brussels, take a little run out to Waterloo, then to Rotterdam, The Hague and Amsterdam, then across the low lands of Holland and the Rhine valley to Cologne, up the Rhine by steamer to Mainz, thence to Lucerne and on to Rome. They were making a summer visit to the Eternal City, she added, because Mildred and the rest of the party were to return in October, but it was her own expectation to remain abroad for a year.

"I hope we shall be good sailors," said Mildred, "and that the winds will toy gently with the waves while we are crossing."

"They can be very ill-mannered and indifferent to one's wishes, as I have had reason to know," said Lindell, "but my mother always keeps watch of winds and clouds when I am on the sea."

"She will have some other mothers to help her this time," was the reply.

"Mothers believe in prayers," he said. "I used to."

"But you have outgrown them now?" asked Helen.

"Parted with them, whether by going up or down, I hardly know."

"But how strange," he continued, "that we who used to make barefooted tracks in the same dusty road on the way to the little district schoolhouse, and then separated for college, should now find ourselves on the same steamship headed for the old Rome that we used to read about so much!"

"It was you boys who went barefooted, not we," said Mildred.

"Certainly we did," said Helen. "Many a time I pulled off my shoes and stockings, hid them in a fence corner, and on our way home we waded in the little brook and tried to catch minnows with our sunbonnets for nets. Those were happy days."

"And are not these?" asked Lindell.

"Yes, but in childhood one can laugh one moment without falling into solemn reflection the next."

When they had parted for the night Lindell said to himself: "And these are the two little girls that were always going about hand in hand, one never crying without a tear from the other, eating the same apple and dividing their flowers. One of them I always liked, and the other—well, perhaps I loved her a little, as such schoolboy affairs go. But they don't go on when we get older and wiser," he added with a half determined look, as though unconsciously putting himself on the defensive.

They met often during the passage, as was natural from old associations; and the charm of beauty and vivacity on the one side was well matched by Lindell Norwin's rare conversational powers on the other side. He was a master of the easy, flowing and vivid style which has done so much to make the best type of American newspaper writers a power in the land.

Although still young, with the instinct and habit of his profession, he had gathered a large fund of information which was always available. But he was fast developing into the polished worldly kind that think the problem of life most conveniently managed by taking neither the world nor ourselves seriously. Events, ideas and problems were to him questions great or small as they did or did not furnish matter for newspaper columns, and

not as they pressed upon his own inner life. If a theme was good for a weighty or brilliant article it meant something, otherwise not. In conversation he had the habit too, so common to his profession, of extracting information and ideas from everybody he met, a process which is rarely resented by those to whom it is applied. For most persons enjoy talking about their own profession, and, when rightly touched, about themselves. Put a man on his native heath in conversation, and whether his knowledge is great or small, you have a talker.

Lindell's interest even in his two beautiful friends was dominated in part by his habit of drawing out ideas from all sources.

LINDELL EXTRACTS SOME IDEAS FROM HELEN.

"You are going to Waterloo," he said to Helen while walking the long round of the deck to get up an appetite for dinner, and Mildred was in her stateroom trying to stifle some symptoms of seasickness. "What is the attraction there?"

"Well, it is not that of the woman who sees a little blood-spot on the ground, screams, goes away, then comes back and screams again, but because it is Waterloo, and there is only one Waterloo in the world, for there has been only one Napoleon. Think what a career of victory and of

blood it ended! The French revolution was the greatest of all tempestuous revolutions which have swept over the world. Of course, I do not say that there have not been greater revolutions in peace, but in war and waves of blood this was the mightiest storm on the human sea. But the hands of the clock stopped there, and were turned back, but time goes on and the world goes with it. Napoleon is dead and his body in a block of porphyry. But the fire of the French revolution still tingles in the veins, and there will always be revolution in the blood of the race while want cries and is not heard, and hands struggle and clutch at hope and are empty.

“It is my opinion that Providence used the Corsican in his career of mad ambition, but at Waterloo Providence dropped him, cast him aside almost as boys throw away an orange peel, or men the stub of a burnt cigar. He was a spent force, a consumed energy, a mighty man burned to ashes in the furnace of his own consuming ambition and pride.”

“But why does the world turn back to him so often with renewed interest? Why these revivals of Napoleonism?”

“Because the world loves a brilliant spectacle, and Napoleon’s career of conquest is the most dazzling spectacle in all the annals of war. But there

is a greater motive in these revivals. As the race grows older and looks deeper into life, it becomes more and more interested in the power of the human spirit. And no man that ever lived furnishes such an illustration of this power as the man who stepped upon the raging billows of the French revolution when a mere boy, stilled the awful storm of his people's passion, caught all the forces in his hand, turned them to his own purpose, and brought all Europe to his feet.

"Think what he put into a few years, into hours, into the very minutes! He said that the Austrians lost a victory because they did not know the value of fifteen minutes. One is tempted to say that Napoleon is the only man who ever knew the tremendous value of time, or the amazing resources of the human mind. Did you ever read his life without feeling how mighty we could all be if we were only awake to the power within us? An American college president has said that three-fourths of our energies lie dormant. In Napoleon nothing slept. All, all was action, and every energy an electric motor. While leading vast armies to signal victories, he was ruling the empire at home down to the last detail.

"It is this that takes me to Waterloo. I want to stand on the wheat field where it ended, and think it all over again. Of the sin, shame and wrong of

his career I have not spoken, for you only asked what attracted me, and on this I have dwelt."

Lindell found it easy to agree with Helen's view of Napoleon, but he was not long in discovering that along the line of religious convictions she presented points of resistance which he took pleasure in antagonizing. Like all skeptical men, he never felt himself convinced by his own arguments or at rest in his positions. A great authority has said that skepticism is arrested thought. The result is that the arrested thought is always trying to break loose and go on.

"We spoke of the prayers of our mothers last night," he said; "do you believe in prayer?"

"Why not?"

"Because the laws of the universe are eternal, unchangeable. God don't suspend them or change them to answer anybody's prayers."

"But who says He does?"

"Why, that is what prayer virtually means."

"No, it does not. It is a law of water, the eternal, unchangeable law of gravity, to run down-hill, but the great pumps down there in the hold are forcing it up-hill. The law of gravity has been neither suspended nor altered, but man's intellect has devised a means of overcoming this law and taking water up, where the law would take it down. It is brain against water, and mind against matter, and mind

rules. God is mind, and rules. He is not a slave to law and blind force, but the master.

"If I asked you to carry a cup of water up-stairs to a sick child, would you plead that it would violate the law of gravity to take water up-hill? And must God the Father of all be hidden helplessly behind law while his pain-smitten children hopelessly cry to him?

"A child cries and a mother hears and comes. Would there be this cry of prayer in our hearts if God did not hear and help?

"We skim over these waters against wind and wave. The might of man's genius has found forces for overcoming them, that is all. Vast are the secret forces which God has at hand. An answer to prayer is no more of a miracle than this world would now be to Cæsar if he were suddenly to step into it again. While we ride on top of the waves, underneath is a cable flashing messages to and fro, outrunning time and setting distance at naught. What would Cæsar say to that if he were to step suddenly upon this deck and you were to tell him of it? He was skeptical, but there is not a miracle in the Gospels which he would not more readily believe than this story of the ocean cable. And yet how simple the explanation! Man has discovered and applied forces in a way that Cæsar never dreamed of, though he was a paragon of in-

tellect. And why may not the Creator know of forces which man with all his progress may not discover and handle in the next thousand or ten thousand years? I do not say this because I think God needs to use physical force, but because we cannot think these matters out without predicated physical force."

"But don't you think that prayer is mostly for the internal or spiritual benefit of the suppliant, a good kind of practice or spiritual exercise?"

"It has that effect, but that is not the object. When Christ told a parable to teach men that they ought to pray, he said that there was a poor widow who went to an unjust judge. Did she do that simply for the sake of exercise, for the effect on her health? No, and no more do men pray merely for the sake of spiritual exercise. The first good reason for prayer is this: 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"

"But then, where there is so great mystery, why should we be asked to believe so much when we understand so little? It is always, 'believe, trust.'"

"But why did we get aboard this steamship? Because we understood all the machinery which sends it on its way? For my part, about all that I understood was that if I crossed the gang plank it would lead me to the other shore; and that is all that I need to understand. I trust to the captain

for the rest. Isn't it largely so out on the sea of life? The machinery of the world, of the sun, moon and stars, of winds and rains, of buds and blossoms, springing seeds and waving harvests, of human deeds, human hearts and minds, of sobs and tears, of laughter, love and hope, of the infant's cry and the dying moan, of our coming in and departing hence, is too vast and too intricate for me to understand much or even a little of it. I leave it all to the Great Captain, who watches over all seas, all lands, all homes, all cradles, all graves, all hearts and hopes."

CHAPTER XII.

A STORMY DAY AT SEA.

At rest the sea is gloriously beautiful. In storm it is grand. There is but one drawback. It overwhelms you with its boundlessness, and reduces you to a feeling of helplessness because it spreads everywhere, reaches on and on, fills all space and leaves no line of escape. To every one it seems to say: "I have you all to myself. I have smoothed out the path by which you came. I can toss mountains of water across the path before you. What I shall do you cannot know until it is done." This sense of helplessness deepens in time of storm, when even the greatest ship seems such a little thing among the mighty waters, when it reels, shivers and groans, when the waters open their deep, gurgling throat at its side or thunder across its deck, or catch it up in giant arms and pitch it to the top of a huge billow and then fling it back again into the trough of the sea. Above is the dissolving blue of the sky, or changing, shifting, whirling clouds; below are the restless, angry, bot-

tomless waters; and you are suspended between the two, with nothing to catch at above or to rest upon below. It is then, if ever, that you feel what a poor weak thing you are among the mighty elements which rule the realms of space, and that sense and spirit cry out for a firm foundation.

When Lindell came upon deck in the morning, he found a storm in possession of the day. It was flying its white banners from the crests of the waves, and tossing the ship about at its pleasure.

He was a good sailor, and went to his breakfast at the sound of the gong, but the chairs were empty. He returned to the deck, hunted up his steamer chair, drew his rug about him and kept quiet until the noon hour approached. Then he sauntered into the library. Nobody was reading, but a half-dozen men seemed to be thinking very solemnly of home, or of the superior advantages of a residence on land. He went to the drawing room. It was a spectacle for physicians and nurses. Young women and older women had thrown themselves down on sofas or on the carpet, with an abandon of helplessness which seemed to say that they thought their last hour had come, and they did not care if it had. On the stairway he met a woman or two who were clinging to the railing and slowly climbing up towards the deck, with a look on their faces which seemed to mean that

they had just received a telegram from home announcing the death of the whole family.

He returned to the deck, took a turn or two around its heaving, uncertain surface. He saw, in corners here and there, some victims of the day who were making a brave struggle with their breakfasts, and who, as usual with seasick people, had ordered a double menu. Then his attention was arrested by a handsome New York girl who had been leaning over the side of the vessel, supported by two of her friends. When she turned back she said, with admirable sang-froid: "Now throw me overboard."

Next came a jaunty young man who had kept his face well to the wind and held out bravely. But he suddenly began to turn pale, and started for his stateroom; but the ship swung from under him, and a prominent organ of his body became unmanageable. He seized his cap—it was not made or bought for that purpose—but he used it.

Lindell's attention was next attracted by an old lady who evidently had not been at sea before, and was more familiar with the arrangements of a quiet country home than with the appointments of a steamship. As the vessel swung to and fro her uneasiness increased, and it was plain that she was having a serious struggle with her sensations. Near her was the open mouth of a great pipe or

ventilator which conducted the air below into an eating room used by the steerage passengers. It seemed to be very convenient to her in case of an emergency. The vessel lurched again; the old lady's face twitched, and she looked furtively at the pipe. There was another lurch, and she struggled with herself a moment, then hurried across the intervening space, put her head in the mouth of the pipe and had her battle out with herself, the flesh, the ship and the sea. But a storm burst out in the eating room below. There were angry women and mad men down there; and an officer soon appeared upon deck with a thunder-cloud on his brow. But a calm look of innocence was upon the old lady's face, and everything was behaving itself except the sea and the vessel.

Late in the afternoon Mildred Clingman came on deck, but held out just long enough to tell Lindell that they had been very much occupied in their stateroom during the day, that they had been seriously thinking of returning home at once, and anyhow they were both agreed that they would be willing to give a western farm for a little patch of ground to stand on until they had recovered their equilibrium.

Before morning the wind lulled, and when day opened it threw its flood of light across a sea which had dropped its angry waves into smiling

dimples. Helen and Mildred appeared in good time, a little paler, but with a cheery air which soon broke into sunlight and laughter as they alluded to the episodes of the previous day.

Lindell asked them to join his New York friends, and then began an acquaintance which had its significance in after days.

The Stanvelts were an old family, prosperous and aristocratic. The mother was somewhat reserved in conversation, but had a good, motherly manner, a sweet face and gentle voice. The son, who was of Lindell's age and a junior partner in his father's firm, had a face that invited you to trust his generosity, but a manner that left you in doubt as to how near you could come in social matters. He seemed not to have fully made up his mind in regard to himself or to care to make it up about anybody else. The daughter was pretty and graceful, but had evidently been more disposed to lean upon her many advantages than to use them. She looked admiringly at Lindell, a fact which, as their intercourse increased, gave Mildred more concern than it did Helen.

"Those western friends of yours are rather interesting," said Mr. Stanvelt after the little group had broken up for lunch. "You are not going to monopolize them all the way across."

"Go ahead, my boy. It will do you good to ex-

tend your knowledge across the Alleghenies. But don't lose your heart."

"You seem rather sensible of danger. Have you been hurt?"

"Oh, no, but young people are apt to become sentimental at sea."

SOME MORE SPARRING ABOUT CREEDS.

In the evening while Mildred was promenading with their eastern friends, Lindell renewed his attacks on Helen's religious defenses.

"I don't believe much in creeds," he said. "My motto, is 'Character, not creeds.'"

"That is to say, you believe in apples but not in apple-trees, in roses but not in rose-bushes. You would grow them on a puff of air, I take it. For you might as well talk about raising apples, wheat and corn without trunks, stalks or stems, as to talk about character without something to grow on, and if it does not grow on belief, on what does it grow?

"The only fault that I find with creeds," she continued, "is that the church has been disposed to turn them into cast-iron fences instead of keeping them as living trunks and stalks breathed upon by the winds of to-day, watered by the clouds that now gather and the dews of the morning that is ever returning.

"Creeds that are dead are apt to become fuel with which to burn heretics; creeds that are alive bring forth the fruits and flowers of living virtues.

"In the nature of the case all creeds have in them an element of time and place and environment, of special emphasis and particular defense against the dangers which called them into existence. Not to let those elements drop out with changing environment, is to strike them with decay.

"But where the interests are so great and questions concern time and eternity, this world and another, it is but natural that the race should try to sum up and formulate the wisdom of all ages, the results of all prayers and pains and conflicts, in creeds."

"You speak of another world," said Lindell, "but what is the use of worrying about another world? I like the saying, 'One world at a time is enough for me.'"

"That is a good catchword, good to catch idiots," said Helen with a smile and a merry twinkle of the eye which broke the force of the personal application.

"Suppose," she continued, "that a blade of grass said, 'A clod of earth is enough for me.' Would it be true? No, for it must have wind, rain and dew, the great throbbing forces of the earth, night and morning, sunshine and seasons, and for these it must have more than a clod, a meadow, a valley, a continent and seas and all the planets. It must have a universe to grow in.

"Of only one Being can it be said: 'He maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains,' and that is the Creator of the universe. And so with man, we say that he lives in a town, or in a house by the way, but that is only a little fragment of the truth. He lives in a universe. His feet are upon the earth, but his thoughts are in all worlds. All that is above and below the stars speaks to him, asks him questions, stirs his spirit, wings his imagination, beckons to him, bids him run and rise. One world never held the human spirit, and never can. One age bounds no life. Into the stream of to-day's life flow the currents of all the past. All generations helped to build the ship in which we are swiftly ploughing the deep. Listen, and you can hear the sound of the woodman's rude axe which thousands of years ago hewed out the crude little canoe that grew and gretened into this palace upon the waters. In all the long way up from the woods and wilds of the past, man was working toward the promise of the future. And so do we to-day. The push of the ages is behind us, the promise of greater things before us. Without the current behind us, and the hope before us, we should be like a boat stranded upon a sand-bar in the midst of a stream. This is the double impulse that moves the race. The power that spurs the individual is his sense of immortality. It moves him

mightily, girds him with strength, strengthens and glorifies his life.

"Was there ever a more beautiful or greater life on earth than that of Jesus of Nazareth? And to him the world above or beyond was as real as the world here. He talked of heaven as familiarly as we talk of home and fireside, of going back to it as children go home from school."

"One world is not enough. Two worlds double the motive, double the resolution and the courage, multiply the reasons for being good and true, and open wide the gates to vision and hope."

"But, Miss Hungerford, I do not believe in a world of perdition, to use a milder term than is generally employed."

"Nor do I, and I am not going there."

"But why should any one be sent there?"

"They are not sent, they go. You have seen that the paths are always parting, one to the right, the other to the left."

"From childhood human beings begin to separate, choosing higher or lower, or better or worse ways. You see that as we grow older the gates around us close, the hedges and the walls rise higher. At twenty-five we have passed the gates of the school; at thirty most of the choices of occupation; at forty a man can do little more than walk on in the

way which he has chosen, whether it be prosperous or hard and bare. Morally and religiously it is much the same. Life closes in upon us hard and strong, and at last we come to the right hand and the left hand of the great throne, and all is fixed, character within, environment without. We take our places in the scale and condition of being. There is one thing we are always forgetting in our thoughts about future punishment, and that is that our choice extends to conduct and not to consequences. A woman heated in the ball-room may sit down in a draught of cold night air, that is her act, but the cold, the cough and the consumption which follow are consequences which she does not choose.

"A young man may begin a course of dissipation, that is his own will; the drunkenness, the poverty and the ruin which follow are consequences beyond his will. Penalties are fixed by eternal laws, by infinite fiats. We cannot will them away, or think them away, or measure or modify them."

"Let that pass; but how do you prove the Bible?"

"I don't prove it. It proves itself. 'That the Scripture may be fulfilled,' is an awful saying, as well as a good one. This world is run on a basis of fulfilling scripture. It fulfills itself on those who disobey it, and to those who believe it. Millions have proved its warnings true in their misery,

groans and tears. Millions of others have scaled the heights of its promises with triumphant shouts.

"But let me ask you a question," said Helen, turning and gazing steadily at Lindell. "Why do you drink wine? Your mother is a great temperance woman and taught you to let it alone."

Lindell was a little perturbed by the suddenness of this question, but was too much master of himself to permit more than momentary embarrassment.

"Life on a western farm," he replied, "is very different from the social whirl in a great city. Mother's ideas of raising a boy are as simple as raising chickens. But when a boy gets out into the world, he finds life very complex, he don't like to seem a tenderfoot. If you have been brought up like a blade of grass it is well to discharge your youthful identity as soon as possible. In Rome you must do as the Romans do. Don't you see that everybody drinks on a steamship? When we cross a gang-plank we are out of a temperance country. It is wine, bottles of beer, champagne, something, at every meal and between meals. You will drink wine in Rome for your health?"

"And you don't draw the line on wine or health?"

"No, not always."

Helen looked away, and the lines of her face seemed to be settling into a resolution which he

instinctively felt might cross his path some day. It was one of those little intimations of the human countenance, which failing to perceive or heed, we sometimes miss the things we most desire, but noting, we are made more wise.

Lindell went to his stateroom thinking better of Helen and worse of himself.

"She has the simple views of childhood," he said, "cultivated into a fine philosophy. But I am being dissolved, the resolutions and beliefs of my boyhood are melting away, or oozing out at every pore. I have been dropped into the world's hot life like a block of limestone in a kiln, and am coming out lime; and I shall probably use myself to whitewash the follies of society and the sins of the public, instead of being a living stone in the eternal temple."

CHAPTER XIII

SEA AIR ACTS ON THE HEART.

THE salt air of the sea stimulates the friendship of young people on a steamship, and the abundant leisure of idle days gives ample opportunity for its cultivation and manifestation. To look into fresh young faces is more interesting to anybody than the constant gazing at wide waters or into endless spaces of sky, and when Cupid is hovering near and putting fire in maidens' glances, those who still have the most important problem of the heart to solve feel the effect in a way which not infrequently develops romantic tendencies into sudden ripeness.

Before the passage came to a close Lindell's interest in Helen was of a kind or a degree which he would not have cared to confess to any one but himself, and to her he could make no avowal, for she avoided that point with the timidity of a frightened deer.

When he alluded to the romantic little episodes of their school days, she instantly directed his at-

tention to a sail passing along the edge of the horizon, or commented on the diverging paths of the many vessels which left the same port and scattered over all the wideness of the ocean; and then added, that it was the same with human lives.

He knew what she meant, but recalled the words of his mother, and felt half persuaded that, with a maiden's heart, she might only be avoiding the final attack, which she knew meant surrender.

Mr. Stanvelt felt attracted by her beauty and her brilliant powers of conversation, but repelled by her strong convictions.

"I don't see," he remarked to Lindell, "how a young woman just out of the schools, up on modern thought, with such a philosophical cast of mind, can hold to such simple and old-fashioned beliefs."

"You wouldn't think it strange," replied Lindell, "if you knew her parents. She can readily be excused for thinking that her mother's religion is good enough for her. And they say that her father remarked when sending her away to school that their religion had made several good generations of Hungerfords and Elwoods, that it had stood by him on the field of battle, and in all the affairs of life, that it had helped her mother and himself to bear their greatest sorrow, and he did not want her to give it up for any new-fangled philosophy, or at all, unless she felt profoundly

convinced that she would be stultifying her reason to continue to believe as they had.

"It is my opinion that while she began believing as her parents did, she has reasoned the whole matter out for herself, and got down on what she considers bed-rock. And is not that the rational way, for everybody?

"To think a belief old-fogyism because our parents held it, is not more absurd than to continue to believe a thing simply because they believed it, when we have become old enough to think for ourselves.

"The perilous stage in religious belief is when we reach our majority, and reason commands us to take possession of the contents of our own minds. At that critical period too many people empty their minds of past beliefs as they would a garret of old rubbish, when they ought to enter into possession in their own name, as they would of houses and lands, good for a home and for bread."

"That is good philosophy," said Mr. Stanvelt, "but why don't you talk that way to Miss Hungerford? It would improve your chances, for between you and me and the flag-staff, I don't think she likes your skeptical tendencies. When we met that steamship this afternoon, she remarked to Miss Clingman and myself, 'That vessel is bound in, and we are bound out; both captains have charts

and compasses and know just where they are going, and where they are each day. It ought to be the same way with men and women. They ought not to be out on the sea of life in a fog without a rudder, compass, course or haven ahead.' I suspect she thinks you are beating about at sea without knowing just where you are, or whither bound; and being a sensible girl, she would hardly care to get aboard your ship.

"If you want her to take passage with you on the sea of matrimony, you'd better nail your flag to the mast head and put in some good religious machinery right away."

"Thank you, but what about yourself?"

"Well, I don't think that everything that calls itself progress is a new discovery. There are not many Columbuses, you know. Men sometimes think that they are discovering new land, when they are only running into an old-fashioned fog-bank. And there are lots of polar expeditions in the theological world. Ambitious captains sail out of theological harbors, where ships laden with the wealth of all lands are coming and going, up into the frozen regions of the north where stunted pines moan in the sharp winds for mates and where darkness broods over the land like death, and where we have to send two more expeditions to hunt up the first. In my opinion the true religion is in the

temperate zone. There is a belt of belief which lies across the ages of history in which all great things grow, missions, churches, colleges, Christian homes, asylums, hospitals, reformatories, republics. I shall keep my tent pitched in this belt until I see somebody raising something outside of it. And I shall have to see them doing it somewhere else than in novels. The people who believe nothing, and yet are doing everything, are the creatures of fiction, the heroes of men and women who like the fruits of Christianity but not the faith which bears the fruit. There is Dutch blood in my veins, and brave little Holland took the Pilgrim baby up in its arms when England cast it out, and nursed it at its believing breast until it was able to set up for itself in the New World. I am not ashamed to hold on to the apron-strings of such a mother."

"You and Miss Hungerford would no doubt get on together delightfully well."

"We shall part to-morrow and I don't expect to see her again, unless I cross her path on my way to the Italian lakes. But I am willing to admit that she has been like a sea breeze to a man's inner life."

"But don't say that we shall part to-morrow, Mr. Stanvelt; I have been planning with your mother and sister to go with the other party to Brussels and Waterloo. I want to see Waterloo

myself, and write about it. It will all be very nice."

"Yes, it will all be very nice," said Mr. Stanvelt, looking at Lindell and broadly smiling. "And I hope that it won't prove another Waterloo to anybody."

To his numerous inquirers the first officer said that they would see land at daylight. "We shall be up in good time," exclaimed the members of Helen and Mildred's party. And with the first glimmer of morning light they were on deck peering into the eastern mists. Soon a little hump of land stood up in the gray of the morning, looking like an overgrown hay-stack in a distant meadow. They shouted with that rapture which comes from a first glimpse of the Old World, and which can never be felt with the same thrill again.

As the passengers went ashore, a long line of friends and fathers and mothers stood watching eagerly for coming sons and daughters or other absent ones. An old woman poorly clad looked with hungry, piercing eyes toward each coming face as if all her heart and hope hung upon the expected but uncertain meeting of some one from the ship.

"That woman startled me," said Mildred, when they had passed her. "Do fathers and mothers wait with an eagerness like that on the eternal shore?"

They were soon busy with customhouse officials, and then taking the waiting train, flew across the fair fields of France, often so long and narrow as to look like ribbons of varying shades stretched across the land.

Two thousand years of plowing, patting and petting, have given to the cultivated hills and valleys and plains of Europe a smoothness and roundness which make them doubly charming to the eye that has long looked upon the wilder face of the Western World. And the ride was one of delightful surprise.

At beautiful Brussels they spent the night, and the next morning took the train for Braine-la-Leude, for it was here and not at the Waterloo station that the great battle was fought.

Common stage coaches or diligences carried them to the forks of the road half a mile from the station, beyond which is the vast mound erected by Great Britain to mark the field, and on which stands the victorious lion.

At the cross-roads were the usual number of freckle-faced peasant girls whose stock of English was equal to their stock of button-hole bouquets, photographs, and other small wares, and who so artfully combine the tactics of the coquette, flatterer and beggar, as to be quite formidable.

The men who sold canes were also there—the

number of canes which grow on the wheat fields of Waterloo is something astonishing—as was also the man whose grandfather fought on the memorable Sunday, and who was eager to show the party over the field for a franc apiece, or as much as he could get. Ascending the long iron stairway to the top of the mound, they looked down upon the most famous battlefield of all times. To one who has seen Gettysburg, with its magnificent setting of lofty hills and mountains, and its great boulders which remind him of the hand that guided the glaciers in their irresistible sweep across the continent, Waterloo looks small and insignificant. On all sides are wheat fields with stalks standing straight up in the sunlight. Fences and hedges run here and there without regard to points of the compass, roads slant over the gentle slopes and little houses stand by the way. Hougomont is marked by a clump of trees, and the place of the fierce assault on the left by a group of monuments—Scotch soldiers fell thick and fast there. A plain farm-house which was Napoleon's headquarters is hardly beyond rifle-shot from the mound. It seems but small compass for armies fighting for the mastery of the Old World.

But great is Waterloo, and though the winds long ago carried away the last moan of its dying warriors, and the rains washed out the

deep stains, and for scores of years men have been harvesting bread from the soil which other men bathed with their blood, yet it is impossible to look upon it without a deep feeling of awe. Far from town or fortress or the great places which human feet tread, a place for peasants to plow and to pass over with the sickle, for larks to soar across, and the robin to build its nest in the hedges, yet big with human fate, the last stand and struggle of a destiny which seemed hitched to the stars.

"Do you think," said Lindell, "now that you are looking down upon Waterloo, that the great Corsican was beaten because he met a greater warrior?"

"No," said Helen, "he was beaten 'because the shadow of a hand was upon the field, because God passed over Waterloo.'"

"But do you think that he was a physically exhausted man, the victim of a strange malady that robbed him of his strength? Can it be true that he leaned his head upon the table, which they set out in that little yard for him, and slept while the battle was raging, and that he could scarcely be kept awake while fleeing from the enemy?"

"I do not know. I am just letting memory hover over the field, as the clouds brooded over it on that June Sunday, and looking at the columns of hero-worshippers marching into the jaws of death, and

listening to the groans of the fallen and the curses of the living when the last blow had been struck, and nothing was left but the wretched hope of escape by flight.

"How I should like to call Napoleon's face out of the past as it looked at that moment when he knew that he was beaten, and that his star had set forever!

"What must the myriads of the dead, whom his victorious armies had beaten into the earth, have thought when they saw him swept before the storm? If the mad scenes of this world roll before the eyes of departed spirits, theirs must have been a sweet revenge.

"But he was Napoleon, and how I wish he had been as good as he was mighty!"

"But would he have been so mighty if he had been good?" asked Mr. Stanvelt. "There is something in a mighty intellect being free from all scruples of conscience, left unhindered in the exercise of all its terrible energies."

"I know it. It certainly is a fair question to ask, how much moral and religious scruples have weakened men—not that it should be so, but that it is so—when they do not enter upon a life of goodness with the same passionate abandon that other men sometimes give themselves over to evil ambitions. For this reason, perhaps, we are commanded to

love God with all our mind and soul and heart and strength. Anything less than this, is a degree of weakness. Goodness is greater than wickedness, but a mixture is weaker than either. The devil's might is his absolute freedom from all scruples. An archangel's strength is his freedom from all reservations."

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM THE RHINE TO ROME.

AT Brussels the two parties separated, Lindell and the Stanvelts taking an afternoon train for Paris, and the other party going north to Antwerp, The Hague and Amsterdam. The beauty of The Hague and its splendid art gallery gave them the greatest delight. Upon Amsterdam, quaint, solid, built to stay, come storms, floods or fires, with its canals, old-fashioned houses and well-fed people in the streets, they looked with eager curiosity.

Crossing over to Cologne, through the fine wheat fields which do not yield the palm even to the rich prairies of the West, they did what all visitors do first, turned their eyes upward along the height of its far-famed spire. After running in and out of its narrow little streets, admiring its broad avenues, filled with new and handsomer homes, and resting for a night at its celebrated Hotel du Nord, they took a steamer for Mayence.

They found the Rhine what everybody finds it, one of nature's great poems, written across a land.

What with its terraced slopes, its vine-covered hills, its old castles, its little villages nestling between the water bank and the heights, and its pretty homes peeping through avenues of shade trees and orchards, it deserves all the praise which has been given it in prose and song.

"Bingen, dear Bingen, dear old Bingen on the Rhine!" exclaimed Mildred, as they passed the famous village. "I don't wonder that the soldier who lay dying in Algiers sighed for you."

At Mayence they saw the fortresses, the parks of artillery, and the soldiers tall and straight, and the handsome young officers who tip their caps to their fellows with a grace cultivated by the training of a race. There are some things that it takes generations to produce, and the bearing of a German soldier seems to be one of them. It is a flower which has blossomed on the stock of a thousand years' growth.

"Germany," said Helen, before they left its border, "is a military camp. This is war at rest, a nation armed to the teeth to keep the peace. But where? On its frontier? or on the border line between the common claim and the divine right of kings? The soldiers wear uniforms and the peasants sad faces. Young men carry muskets and women and dogs draw burdens, and cows plow fields and do dairy duty. Would a Western farmer

plow with a cow? No, he would vote everybody out of office before he would come to that. But an American would answer his country's call to arms as quickly as one of these soldiers. America has a standing army, but it does not stand around in straps and stiff clothes doing nothing, but works until the drum taps and then is off for duty."

At Lucerne they sat upon the piazza of the Schweitzerhof in the evening listening to the soft music and watching the throngs which glide across the quay, while the sweet air of the Alps puts its pleasing spell upon the senses.

The next day they sailed over the lake and looked at the spot where Tell sprang from the boat, if ever there was a Tell—who can tell? They climbed the Rigi, and looked down upon the clouds and far off into the valleys. Snow-capped peaks stood up against the horizon, nature's monuments of pure praise, their white robes untouched by the dust or smoke of the toiling, hurrying, worrying world below.

With another morning they were on the train for Milan, dashing in and out of countless tunnels and flying around the edges of fearful precipices, glancing with half frightened looks at the huge masses of rock which lifted themselves far up into the blue sky. And then the scene changed, the Alps swung to the rear, and the train swept down

from their great heights into the sunny fields of Italy.

Corn grows here, and wheat, rich meadows of grass, orchards and vineyards, and there are signs of plenty and thrift everywhere.

"Were there ever such beautiful fields as these?" cried Mildred. "But how primitive their methods and implements! Look at them beating out their wheat with a flail just as Gideon used to do, or tramping it out with oxen. Why don't they wake up? Italy needs to be run through a modern threshing machine."

"In more senses than one," said Helen.

At this moment a motherly woman came forward and introduced herself as an American, from New York.

"I knew you were Americans when I saw you at the station this morning. Your brisk manner betrayed you," she added with a smile. "Nobody over here but Americans are ever in a hurry. It makes no difference how badly you want your breakfast or anything else, or how early your train starts, it takes just so long to get it. All movement seems to be fixed by a law of gravity or custom as unchangeable as the law of the Medes and Persians.

"But I heard you speak of going to Rome; do you think it safe at this time of the year? There

is always danger of the Roman fever in summer. I have reason for fearing it. Last summer my niece went there in July with a party of friends—she could not wait until fall, being in school—and in a few days she was taken with the fever and died. Two years ago a young friend of ours, a gentleman, died there in the same way. I don't think you ought to risk it. I shall go to Milan, take a peep at the Duomo and then go back to the lakes, they are so beautiful."

"But we all want to see Rome," said Mildred, "and we must all be back in America in autumn except Miss Hungerford."

"Just so; Americans always travel so far and so fast. They want to gain the whole world and—not lose any time about it. But do be careful when you reach the city; keep out of the hot sun, don't go out at night; don't drink water, and wrap yourselves up well if you go into the Catacombs."

When she had withdrawn, Mildred said: "That was a kind face and a kind voice and a good heart, but I wish the lady had not told us about those two young people dying. It gave me a chill."

"You will forget all about the fever when you see St. Peter's," said one of the party who had previously visited the city, and had been voted chaperon by the rest.

To dash into Milan in the Italian splendor of

an early summer evening is an event which stirs the blood of every traveler capable of enthusiasm. It is Italy's most prosperous city. The Duomo, or cathedral, is the wonder of the world. Its foundations were laid over five hundred years ago. Its façade is of Carrara marble, white and beautiful. Its dome rises to a height of 350 feet, and around it stand a hundred pinnacles and 4,500 statues. Standing out in the glittering rays of Italian sunlight, the massive pile is one of dazzling splendor.

Within this splendid temple of praise, and of pride, Napoleon was crowned king of Italy, and Josephine queen.

"I am thankful," said Helen, as they looked upon it, "that in those days of princely extravagance, ecclesiastical ambition and bitter taxation, they built some things to stand and to bless the eyes of all generations. This is poetry in marble, man's attempt to match in material form the psalms of praise which lift their snow-covered domes above the Alps. It belongs to generations who made temples, statues, pictures. We belong to a generation that makes money."

"And spends it," said Mildred, "traveling to see what others with more art in their blood made worth seeing."

Milan has a habit of getting up at two or three o'clock in the morning to transact the business of

the day, a custom which did not conduce to the rest of the party in the after part of the night. But they were at the morning train eager and expectant, and were soon hurrying away to Genoa.

No country looks beautiful when viewed from the inside of a tunnel, and the almost endless series of tunnels near Genoa snuff out the sunlit scene with a frequency that becomes vexatious.

The halt in the famous old city which claims Columbus was not long, and through the afternoon they were whirled down the shore of the Mediterranean, with the sparkling waters on one side, and the luxuriant gardens filled with plum, fig and apricot on the other.

At Pisa they stopped for the night and Sunday. The hotel was beautiful, with its mosaic floors, white marble window ledges and stately columns. Great vases of flowers, and urns filled with palms and other tropical plants, stood in the halls and recesses. But it had a deserted air. Pisa is for winter, and the throngs which had made it a scene of brilliant display were gone. Visiting a resort at the wrong season is depressing.

As Helen stood at her chamber window looking through its marble frame, an ambitious young rooster crowed in the back yard. A tear came into her eye.

"What is the matter, Helen?" asked Mildred.

"I am not shedding a tear, like Peter, because I have suddenly repented coming so far. But that salute from the back yard made me think of the farm and home and mothers five thousand miles away. I wish the little fellow wouldn't crow any more."

"Let us go and see the Marble Bridge and the Leaning Tower, and then you won't hear him."

A short ride took them to the Marble Bridge, built from the Carrara quarries, which are near by, and spanning the Arno, a structure much visited and much admired. Beyond is the Leaning Tower, seven stories high, a row of marble columns making each story, and the whole structure leaning heavily, but why no one knows. Near by is the great Cathedral whose foundations were laid 800 years ago, and whose gold-gilded ceiling is as bright and beautiful as it was when the decorator finished his marvelous work three centuries since.

The Baptistry, or Church of St. John, is alongside. It is famous for the echo of its dome, which comes back with rhythmic repetition that falls upon the ear in charming cadence.

"You see now," remarked the chaperon before they left the once famous capital, "why I said that no visitor to Italy can afford to pass Pisa by."

ROME.

As the sun mounted over the hills, stood above

them and poured its wondrous floods of light across the land, their train shot past the little houses, the farmers in the fields, past lanes and hedges, and swept out into the wastes of the Campagna. There is nothing as beautiful as an Italian day except an Italian night, but nothing can make the Campagna beautiful. For it is the bare floor of what was. When the Cæsars died it gave up in despair. Its only attractive features are high-horned cattle and lofty hay-stacks, built with such a touch of art that the pattern must have been made by Michael Angelo.

As the morning wore away the train dashed over a valley and touched the bank of a tawny, sluggish stream. It was the Tiber. Then it rounded a hill, passed a rank growth of tall weeds up into the open—and before them was Rome. There was a shout, laughter, some tears. They waved their handkerchiefs and congratulated one another. Any demonstration is pardonable at the first sight of Rome. But Rome cannot be shown on printed pages, or photographed or engraved and distributed over the world. It must be seen and felt. And it cannot be seen and felt by one who lives only in the present. He must look and listen through the ages, see the conquerors as they came up the Appian way, hear the tread of the old legions, the voice of Cicero, the command of Cæsar,

the cruel shouting of the multitude in the Colosseum, the mad cry of wild beasts, the wail of the dying and the prayers and hymns of martyrs. He must reach across the chasm which Christ's coming cut in time, and put his hand on the pulse of a heathen civilization. He must feel its throb of life and pain, its yearnings, strivings, ambitions, hopes and despair. The city's ruined temples, fallen columns, shattered walls and broken statues, must be made to stand up again in all their former stateliness and beauty, while the pagan multitude, laughing, shouting and weeping, passes by.

And there must be no stubborn prejudices in the heart or high walls of bigotry in the mind, but we must let stones and visions speak for themselves.

THEY TAKE A DRIVE

In July the sun's rays at Rome are fierce, penetrating and wilting. But the courage of a company of American girl-tourists is something that defies wind and weather. The characteristic determination of the sex in this country takes on even more mettle when abroad. They are there to see the country, and they do not stand on the order of their going, but go.

Therefore when the chaperon came out of the hotel at the head of her little band, who had armed themselves with bits of ice and lemon, there was

an air of business in their manner which promised a full afternoon of sight-seeing in spite of the heat.

"We shall go out the Appian Way," said the chaperon. "It will take us into the fields where there are breezes, and to the Catacombs.

"Drive by St. John Lateran," she said to the guide, as they entered the carriages.

The Lateran is called the head and mother of all the churches of the city and of the world, and it is here that the Pope makes his solemn entrance into office, and from the balcony over the portico he sometimes blesses the world. Popes of the Middle Ages sometimes blessed their enemies in other places. It is in the piazza of the Lateran that the "Holy Staircase" is found, taken from Pilate's judgment hall, and once trodden by the feet of the Savior, so the tradition says. As they looked upon this staircase a feeble old man was ascending it, kissing each step as he went. Martin Luther once did the same thing, but afterwards changed his mind about it with such violent force as to shake all Christendom.

Another little drive and they were in the Appian Way. It looked narrow and commonplace. A number of one-horse carts were slowly passing along, the drivers stretched out on their seats, taking the siesta so dear to the hearts of Romans, and the horses nibbling at bunches of hay tied to

the end of the shaft. None the less, it was the Appian Way, a way passed by more conquerors and more prisoners and watered by more tears than any highway in all the world. The very pebbles which lie in the road have great stories to tell, if the passer-by but bends the ear of memory and listens.

On the brow of a gentle slope they saw a rough structure, built of unhewn stones—a pile of stones it might be called. It stands hard by the way, and alongside is a fig-tree, dust-covered and looking weary, as if tired standing in the withering heat to watch the old monument. It is the tomb of Seneca, the man who wrote such beautiful precepts and at the same time did Nero's bidding, even to his last command to go away and die.

"Beyond that field," said the guide, waving his hand to the right, "St. Paul was beheaded." They know everything about St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome, even to the forks in the road where Christ met Peter as he was about to leave Rome and told him to go back and seal his faith with his life. But notwithstanding the uncertainty of tradition, to look upon the little heap of stones which marks the grave of Seneca, and then across the field where Paul was "offered up," starts in the mind comparisons and contrasts which have amazing significance. One heap of stones for the pagan

philosopher, and all the churches in Christendom for monuments to the Christian Apostle.

A little further out the carriages halted at a low stone front with a heavy iron gate. A gaunt old man in a monk's habit, his black gown reaching far down toward his feet, appeared and unlocked the gate. It is the entrance to the principal Catacomb.

"Put on your wraps," said the chaperon, "for it is very cool in the home of the dead."

"Not always," said the guide, with a shrug of the shoulder and a chuckle.

The old man handed each a lighted taper with such a saintly benevolence of manner that it was not difficult to think of him as an angel on guard at the home of departed spirits. Then following the guide, they went down into the long galleries which wind here and there, connecting crypts and vaulted chambers. In the sides of the galleries are many niches, and shelves, and here still lie the bones of the dead, along with the relics of funeral obsequies in the far-off past. The temptation to pick up a bone and carry it away for a keepsake is very strong, but the young women, having been properly trained in American Sunday-schools, resolutely refrained.

On the return to the city the party passed up the famous hill on which Cæsar's palace once stood.

Over the gate was the great sign of an enterprising restaurant and wine garden firm. There is nothing impressive or awe-inspiring about such a sign, and the shock was sensibly felt by the whole party, except the guide. For to the average Roman conductor there is nothing so attractive as a wine shop. In sight-seeing he frequently stops by the way to adjust his glasses, but not to the eye.

On the Capitoline Hill they found a pretty garden in which were apricots and figs and flowers. Approaching the Tarpeian Rock, so famous in the school-book annals of early Rome, they looked over the edge and beheld—a dirty back yard in which some begrimed and ragged children were playing. But then the poor must have some place to live, even if they do pitch their tents on spots made eternally memorable by the shades of the past.

To the Forum and the fallen columns and broken arches which surround it they turned with an interest which had been ripening with their years. It was here that the Roman race took that counsel which meant the conquest of the world; and here voices were raised in oratory which will never be hushed as long as the world stands, but their imperishable eloquence will pass on and on, thrilling the young heart of each new generation and throbbing in the brain of master men to the end of time.

Within the broken walls of the Colosseum they stood, as all stand, who realize that they are in the presence of a mighty people's greatest shame and crime.

It is easy to feel yourself transported to the past as you stand upon the sands of the old arena. And the visitors found themselves looking back through the years at the throngs which once gathered along the heights of the now broken wall, throngs eager for the flow of blood, the cry of anger and the moan of pain. Again they saw the gladiators come through the gates, low-browed men, prodded by their keepers, sullen and hopeless. The floors opened or panels of the walls parted, and into the arena sprang wild beasts from African lairs and Indian jungles; lions, tigers, and hyenas, hungry, maddened by the smell of blood and roaring for their prey.

"Through that door," said the guide, pointing to the right, "were sent in the Christian martyrs."

There was a shudder, and the faces of these young women, who had breathed only the air of freedom and been caressed into womanhood by loving mothers, paled as there rose before them visions of the delicate women who walked into the awful horrors of the arena.

"It must have been an awful moment," said Helen, "when they came out upon this sand, red-

dened by blood, turned their eyes toward the cruel, scornful, jeering multitude, and then looked into the eyes of the wild beasts, felt their hot breath upon their cheeks and the fangs rending the flesh. Did they tremble or shrink or weep? Or did prayer and faith sustain them? But, oh, the wantons that looked down from those seats and shouted and laughed at their dying agony! The martyrs gave up their lives, but not their faith, and that faith has changed the face of the world.

“But who can stand upon such a spot as this and not feel that there is a judgment beyond?”

CHAPTER XV.

A DARK SHADOW FALLS OVER THEIR PATH.

"Was there ever such a dream of beauty as St. Peter's?" said Mildred, as she dropped into an easy chair by the window on the evening of the fourth day after their arrival in Rome.

"No," replied Helen. "Such a dream never floated across my vision, either when I slept or read myth or fable or story."

"Do you think any church or cathedral will ever seem beautiful to us again?"

"That is my fear. It will be like coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration to enter even the best of them. How I should like to sit down in the great temple and stay there until its splendor and beauty no longer overwhelmed and dazed me, and my senses had expanded into a better perception of its proportions and harmonies and the poetry of its curves and colors!"

"But to-morrow we are to leave it all behind. And it is well, perhaps, for this heat is dreadful. I thought to-day that the wind must come straight from the sands of Africa, without stopping to caress

the Mediterranean on the way. We have often been told why Rome declined and fell. I think now that the weather was against it. No nation can long rule the world from the mouth of a furnace. Whether the power is that of a Cæsar or a Pope, it must sooner or later wither in such heat as this. Empire runs along higher latitudes. The throne of this world is set further north."

At this moment a messenger was announced with a note for Miss Hungerford. She opened it, and read it with increasing agitation. "It is from the Strangers' Hospital," she said, "written by an attendant for Lindell Norwin. He is there with the Roman fever. We must go to him at once."

And ordering a cab, they were soon at the door of the hospital. After long, hard persuasion, enforced by the English physician who arrived at an opportune moment, they were admitted. "He is a very sick man," said the physician, "but we always hope for the best. I insisted on sending for you when I learned that you were his friends and in the city. To see old friends when so far from home will seem like medicine."

When they entered the private ward in which Lindell lay, he recognized them, and with an effort held out his hand. "I am glad that you have come," he said, "but you ought not to be in Rome; the season is unhealthy."

"We shall not stay long with you this evening," said Helen, "but to-morrow I shall come again."

A mingled look of gratitude and pain spread over his face as she said this, and he replied: "Think of yourselves rather than me."

When they returned to the hotel Helen said: "I cannot go away and leave Lindell Norwin here sick. He took my brother in his arms and held him while he died, far from home and mother; and I must stay and do whatever friendship can do for him."

"But if you stay, so shall I," said Mildred. "I cannot leave you here, and neither do I think that we ought to leave him. It may be that we can do something for him."

And so when morning came, the party divided, the others going to Venice and then back north; and Helen and Mildred establishing themselves in the favor of the physician and the authorities at the hospital sufficiently to secure freedom of access to Lindell's ward.

By turns they fanned him through the heated hours of the day or watched at his bedside through the weariness of the night. But he steadily grew worse, and on the third day the physician, a man who had come from London and established a fine practice in Rome, said that he had but little hopes of his recovery.

Helen spoke of Mr. Stanvelt and asked if Lindell had mentioned him. The physician replied that he had, that Mr. Stanvelt was at Lake Como, but that Lindell refused to permit any word to be sent, as he would immediately come to Rome, if he knew he was sick, and he did not want to expose him to danger. "He could do no good if he came," the physician added, "but he might want to arrange some matters with him. If you think he would like to send any message home, you'd better get it from him to-day, for to-night there will be a crisis."

A little later Helen took his hand and said: "If we reach home before you do, and drive over to your old home, and your mother comes down to the gate as you have often seen her do, what shall we say to her about you? Do you want us to give her any message?"

"You are kind," he replied, "but I shall be in America before you are."

"You may have to stay in the Alps to recover your strength, or something else may detain you, and you know how she would like to hear some word carried by friendly lips."

"Tell her, then, that there was never an hour in Rome or on land or sea that some thought of her did not flash over my mind. There is but one message to send to such a mother as mine—love."

In the evening the physician came again, and after a few moments said: "You must be ready for the worst. I do not think he can live the night out. I feel myself as if it was a personal bereavement, for he is such a splendid young man."

In the early hours of the night he was delirious and talked of home and friends. Once he seemed to be back on the field of battle, and then passing through the night when Elwood Hungerford died. And again he spoke of the passage over the sea, and hot blushes came to Helen's cheeks as he passionately spoke her name and tried to reach out his poor feeble hand. But at midnight he grew calmer, and the nurse shook his head.

"He is sinking," he said. "I dread the hours of the night when nature itself drops into helplessness, and the very air loses its vitality."

Mildred turned toward the window with the tears streaming down her face; and Helen came to her, and dropping her head upon her shoulder, exclaimed: "Oh, Mildred, this is dreadful; it will break his mother's heart. He is her only son, her joy and pride and hope. We must not let him die. Let us pray for him again."

And dropping on their knees by his bed, they bowed their heads in silent prayer. The nurse stood awed, and silent. The physician for the ward came, and said that nothing more could be done.

"But something must be done," said Helen. "I do not think that God will let him die. I shall go for the English physician."

And before they could remonstrate she had taken his card in her hand and was hurrying down the stone steps to the street. It was deserted by all save the police, and as she darted past one of these officers he moved forward as if to detain her, but seeing the anguish in her beautiful face, let her go on. The whispering leaves in the shade trees, and the soft sooughing of the winds which crept up from the sea, seemed to her like the low voices of the departed Romans who once came and went on the streets; and she could almost see the forms of the "sheeted dead" starting up before her.

At the door of the physician's residence she stopped breathless and, after long ringing and waiting, a servant came, but only to tell her that the doctor had been called out at midnight, and when he would return it was impossible to say.

With almost despairing heart Helen went back to the hospital. Lindell still lay in a stupor and Mildred was eagerly looking into his face.

Helen put her hand to his pulse. It was growing feebler. Then stroking his hair, she said: "How near death he seems! I am going to kiss him for his mother." And bending over him, she kissed the broad white forehead. He slowly opened

his eyes, then asked in a faint voice: "Where am I?"

"You are here with us," said Helen.

"And who are you?"

"Helen and Mildred, your old schoolmates. Do you know us?"

"Yes, I thought I was at home again, and standing by the brook looking at its cool waters, and they would not let me drink. Where am I? Is mother here? What is the matter? You are all crying."

Helen's voice choked and she turned away her face.

"Tell me the truth," he said; "am I dying?"

"You are very sick," said Mildred, brushing the tears from her face, "but you know what the psalm said that we used to repeat in the Sunday-school on the hill: 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness. He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.'"

"Take me by the hand, then, for I seem to be sinking, sinking, I know not where." His voice died away into a faint whisper.

And they took his hands and held them while he dropped into a sleep which seemed to have more of rest in it, but whether it was the rest of death or of the "sweet restorer" they could not tell. For

an hour no word was spoken, but when the morning light came through the window and fell upon his face, Helen looked earnestly into Mildred's eyes and said: "I think he is a little better."

The doctor came, and laying his hand on his brow, said: "There is more of life here. He has met the crisis and passed it. By the best of nursing we may save him."

The noon train brought Mr. Stanvelt. He said that a tourist who came from Rome to Lake Como two days before had told him of Lindell's sickness, and that he started for the city at once, but hardly expected to find him alive.

For another week Helen and Mildred came and went, bringing flowers and cheering words, putting under his feeble life the strength and joy of their own buoyant life and resolute spirits.

"You have more medicine for this man than I have," said the doctor; "he would have died if you had not held him up by your faith and courage."

Then Mr. Stanvelt took Lindell away to Lake Como to rest for a few days, and then on to Interlachen. He said the soft air of the Alps would soon do wonders for him, and it did. He improved rapidly, and became quite himself again.

"You had a narrow escape," said Mr. Stanvelt one day as they reclined on the settees under the shade trees, looking up the opening at the Jungfrau.

"Yes, it came pretty near being: 'See Rome and die.'"

"The success of your young lady friends in nursing you back into life has strengthened two theories of mine."

"I thought you did not believe in theories."

"Well, I believe in these two theories, and more than ever now. One is that women would make good physicians. The healing art more naturally belongs to woman than to man. Man is the fighter, the destroyer; woman, the peacemaker, the healer, soothing in spirit, voice and manner.

"The other theory is that it is not enough to give a sick man medicine. He has too many departments in his nature, is too great a creature, to be made well again by a little pinch of powder measured on the point of a penknife or a little liquid dropped from a teaspoon. There is a sick mind and a sick heart and a sin-poisoned nature, and a whole series of functions which cannot be reached with a penknife or a teaspoon. A sick man needs to have a healing tide put into his complex system at all available points. Even great men, when death-stricken, have longed to be taken back to their mother's home. I think your young friends helped you by being home and mother to you. They put the bracing memory of childhood under your sinking courage. But with such young doctors hovering over you, I must confess that I should be afraid

that while they were restoring bodily health they would wound the heart."

Lindell made no reply to this observation, but looked so hard at the distant Jungfrau that his friend thought that he must be watching a tourist climbing its icy steeps.

After a time, however, he said: "I have somewhat changed my mind about some things since my experience at Rome. I once wrote to my mother that if a woman misses the right man in matrimony it costs everything, but that for a man it may be one girl or another and he goes on to success all the same. But I don't know about that now. I should like to reserve my decision. But one thing is certain: Inasmuch as I did not die, I ought to think that there was an important reason why I should live."

"So you had, and being a newspaper man with a gifted pen, you could easily make it worth while to live. For you newspaper men come nearer holding the helm of opinion than any other class of men. You sit on the top of the current and have all the world for an audience. We all take you with our breakfast every morning. The breakfast goes to the body, and the newspaper to the moral system. If our coffee was poisoned every morning the race would soon be dead. If you put poison in the newspapers the race will soon be bad. You can do a world of good in the newspaper business, Mr. Norwin."

CHAPTER XVI.

TOGETHER AGAIN AT PARIS.

Two days after the departure of Lindell Norwin and Mr. Stanvelt from Rome, Helen Hungerford and Mildred Clingman were in Florence. Here they received letters from home which had awaited their arrival during the delay at Rome.

"One of my letters is from Jack," said Mildred. "He is very mindful of his sister, and the same jolly boy that he has always been."

"He did not want to seem partial," said Helen, "he has written me."

While Helen read the letter Mildred scanned her face curiously, for what the situation between them might be she did not know. She only knew that her brother had for some time been quite reticent on the subject. But Helen's face gave no sign. When she had finished the letter she said: "He is a splendid letter-writer." Then she lapsed into one of those reveries which her fond companion had learned not to disturb.

After two days spent in the great Ufizzi and Pitti galleries, they went to Venice, and then paid

a hurried visit to Vienna and Berlin. Early in September they reached Paris. Here they met their former party, and with them Mildred crossed the Channel to make a tour of England and Scotland, and to sail from Queenstown for home late in October.

In Paris Helen settled down to the study of French for a few months, making her home with her aunt, who had married a wealthy New Yorker, but who, with her family, was spending a year in the great capital.

The Stanvelts and Lindell Norwin were also in Paris again, but expected to remain only a few days longer. They planned to spend a month in England and then take the same steamer which was to carry Mildred's party.

Lindell felt quite sure that Helen's manner to him had undergone a marked change since the day she told him with a significant look that ships leaving the same port sailed far apart on the sea. She listened with a kindly interest to his future plans, and looked happy when his friends complimented him.

But Mr. Stanvelt said to him one day: "Be cautious; more than one man has broken his neck trying to scale the high peaks of the Alps. That young woman walks the mountain tops. It is safer to watch her at a distance than to try to make yourself her right-hand man."

"But all writers," said Lindell, "soon learn that success in literature lies perilously near the edge where a man makes a fool of himself or gets hurt. The commonplace is safe, and the safe is nearly always commonplace. It is the bold dash that brings applause. Not to make a bold dash in literature, or out of it, is to be mediocre. I think it is so in other things. 'Faint heart,' you know. At all events, I shall soon be off to America and then an ocean will roll between us. I should like at least to have a cable connection."

"Well, make your dash. It won't kill you, if you miss the mark. A man who has been through Roman fever ought to be able to stand anything."

"And a girl who has helped him out of the fever might be willing to help him out of the fire again."

"Yes, but some people will lend a hand but won't lend a heart."

That evening Lindell made his dash. It was in the cozy little parlor of Helen's new home, with none to molest or make him afraid, except the beautiful young woman, whose face had taken on just enough brown in her long rides over the Continent to make her look doubly charming in his eyes.

He took her back along memory's path, and she talked so graciously of former days that it made the way easy for him.

"You said once," he remarked, "that ships sail apart, but our ships come back to the same port. They sailed away from each other at the little schoolhouse on the hill, then met at sea. At Waterloo they parted again and came together at Rome. They then went their way and now are here in Paris. Is it because of magnetic attraction?"

"Not necessarily; it may simply be a coincidence in plans. But speaking of ships; you would not like to put to sea in a leaking ship, would you?"

"Certainly not."

"A man who drinks is a leaking ship. You never know how soon he will be half seas over, or go to the bottom. A woman is never safe in taking passage with him. And when he is in a fog of skepticism, the danger is all the greater."

"But a man can drink a little and still be master of the ship."

"Perhaps; still I think it would be much safer to watch him experiment from the shore."

"What would you think if he stopped drinking?"

"I should think he had done a very wise thing."

"Granted, Miss Hungerford, but I do not like reformers. They have such stiff notions about things, and if they do not become cranks they are always turning the one crank or riding a hobby. It becomes a kind of profession with them to think

the world is going to wreck and ruin. If a husband stays out a minute after ten in the evening he is on the road to perdition, and if a young man looks toward a green blind, or touches a glass of wine with a friend, the devil has him by the nape of the neck and is marching him off to destruction. They like to put audiences of women and children into delirium tremens over awful stories, and to work themselves up into a fury about saloonkeepers, and about everybody else who does not agree with them. Certainly you must understand human nature well enough to know it is a pleasure to be a little bit malicious. It is a felicitous condition of life when people of a malicious disposition can vent their humor on another class of persons and be thought great reformers for doing it. Take away denunciation and half the temperance reformers would be out of a job. They would not know what to say or do. Some of them are forming such habits here that if they ever get to heaven and find everybody and everything good they will be miserable. There will be nothing to scold about and nothing to denounce, unless the Lord keeps some dummies there for them to practice on."

"There is not even a little bit of malice in that speech?" asked Helen with a laugh.

"What if there is? We fellows that are always catching it like to snap back once in a while.

Certainly you will at least admit that most reformers run to hobbies."

"I shall not worry you or myself disputing it."

"First it is temperance, then prohibition, then a third party and then woman suffrage, and in the meantime the liquor-dealers go right on sawing wood, as the phrase is, but the temperance cause suffers."

"But there is one hobby worse than any of these."

"What is that?"

"That of the girl who thinks that she can reform a young man by marrying him."

"If he reforms absolutely, will it be all right then?"

"You seem to me to have a splendid prospect before you," said Helen, "if you will only stand by your mother's principles. The mother's instinct is wonderfully wise. It will be safer for you than the philosophy of the clubs."

Lindell observed that these last words were spoken with more seriousness than had marked the rest of her conversation. For throughout she seemed to be in the attitude of one who thought it to be a little game of banter on his side.

"You don't take me seriously enough," he said.

"I take you at your own estimate," she replied.
"You don't take yourself seriously, or the world,

or anything. That is your philosophy of life."

"I take you seriously."

"And so did I you, when your case was so serious."

"Helen, did you kiss me, when you thought I was dying at Rome?"

"I believe I did, for your mother."

"Perhaps, if mother does not return it, I may have the pleasure some day of discharging the debt."

"There is no debt. Let us forget all about it."

Lindell knew what her manner meant, and rose to leave.

"I wish you much pleasure in these great months which are before you," he said with a voice and manner as calm as usual, and then they parted.

MILDRED'S ROMANTIC LETTER.

During the holidays Helen received a letter from Mildred Clingman which contained a surprise. "I have news to tell you," she wrote. "Lindell Norwin and myself are to be married in February. You know that I always liked him. After watching with him at Rome I loved him. But I thought he preferred you and I loved you so dearly myself that I could hardly feel jealous. We met in England, and on the passage home were thrown much together. I lost my heart completely, and when

we reached the shore I had made the great promise that fixes fate. It was on the last evening at sea that he spoke his word of love. The sea was overhung with fog, and the ship was feeling its way cautiously, with the captain and the pilot on the bridge peering into the heavy mist. The whistle was regularly sounding its warning cry, and over the water came the deep tones of a cannon which some ship was firing.

"As I listened to the warning sounds through the night, a slight chill of misgiving passed over me. I thought, 'What if these warnings are for me, signals of danger on my new sea?'"

"I hope not," said Helen with emotion, as she read this. "So sweet and loving a girl deserves to sail on a sunny sea."

In the same mail came a letter from John Clingman. He said that he had had his first few days of congressional life, and was not sure whether he would like it or not. His law practice, he added, had become so lucrative that he felt very reluctant to give it up for the privilege of being a foot-ball to be kicked at by political enemies, soreheads and cranks.

"But do give me your impressions of the French people and their republic," he said at the close.

And so she wrote: "If I had been here but a week I should know all about the French people

and could write a treatise. But having been in the city nearly four months, I find my knowledge shrinking. I no longer feel quite so sure of everything. To express strong opinions, one needs to fire them off quickly.

"But of one thing I feel quite sure, and that is, that Paris is wonderfully beautiful. When an American college girl comes to Paris she begins to realize the error of having exhausted all the best æsthetic terms on small things. She has no words to express her admiration of the beauty of the city. If she has called a little five-cent fan perfectly lovely, what is she going to say when she takes a ride through the boulevards of Paris?

"The French waiters can fold a napkin around a biscuit so artistically as to make it look as pretty as a bouquet, and when it comes to the masonry and marble of palaces, the fountains, flowers and foliage of parks, and the color and carving of painting and statuary, with great schools of art and untold millions of money to make it all wonderful, what language can express it?

"But the beauty has its background of unpleasant memory. Wherever one looks, the shadow of tragedy falls over the picture. At Versailles I look at the palaces and the paintings, the silk-covered walls and the floors smooth and glittering like mirrors, and wish that there were no blood-

stains on its history to mar the beauty. To be told that the Grand Monarch scraped the flesh from the bones to build the palace, makes it all seem a little dismal. When I looked at the window where Queen Antoinette held the little prince before the enraged mob, I paid her memory the tribute of an unbidden tear. When I looked at the bed on which Louis XIV. folded his hands across his breast and died in peace, I thought what a strange distribution of justice it was that he should impoverish France and his posterity pay the penalty. But so it is. One generation of evil-doers is always pouring hot coals from their windows to fall on the heads of another generation.

"If I were to give an off-hand opinion of the French people, it would be that they sow one thing and try to reap another. They sow to no great convictions, and yet try to reap freedom and justice, results which come only from great convictions. They shout Fraternity and Equality. And yet these are the greatest things of humanity, and can grow only in its deepest soil, and when watered by holy baptisms. But they think they can have such consummations by scratching the surface and talking a little sentiment. And yet, in this we Americans may be imitating them. We talk not a little as if we could throw away Puritan principles and still keep Puritan virtues.

"In my opinion there is but one safe motto: 'If you like the fruit, do not cut down the tree.' The devil's masterpiece is to make mankind believe that they can have the fruit without the tree.

"Sometimes I think the great apostasy, which the New Testament speaks of, will be the attempt of civilization to retain the virtues of Christianity while throwing away Christianity itself. When this has been tried, and disaster and desolation have swept over Christendom, then the world will pick itself up out of the dust, never, it is to be hoped, to make the attempt again, but to go on to the millennium."

In January Helen went with her aunt's family to the Riviera, and later joined an American tourist party and made the round of the Mediterranean ports. After a little trip up the Nile and a short visit to Jerusalem, they returned from Constantinople by rail to Paris, which they reached in May.

CHAPTER XVII.

SAMMY SUDDENDROP'S SWEETHEART.

FOR some two weeks Mrs. Hungerford had noticed that there was something on Sammy Sudden-drop's mind. His frequent absence during the long evenings did not disturb her, for there was a round of holiday festivities and country singing schools and parties. But he was silent at the table, was often in a "brown study" and frequently lingered about as if there was something which he wanted to tell her.

Finally she said to him one evening, when the colonel was absent at a meeting of the Grand Army Post: "Sammy, there is something on your mind."

"Yes, ma'am," he replied, after fidgeting until he had nearly slipped off the chair, "and it's the biggest thing that was ever on my mind."

"Well, what is it?"

"I want to get married."

"Get married! It is on your heart, then, as well as on your mind."

"Yes, Mrs. Hungerford, it's all over me. I've

got it bad, and I've wanted to tell you about it for a good while.

"You are my only mother, and I know you won't be hard on me. Besides, I thought that if you liked me so well you might think that two Suddendrops would be twice as good as one."

"That would depend upon who she is. Who is she?"

"Sadie McNeil."

"Sammy and Sadie, that would be a good pair of names; and she is Scotch and I believe in Scotch stock. But how did you get on such good terms with Squire McNeil's daughter?"

"It all happened itself. She kept eying me, and I eyed her. Then I cut a nice little poem out of the paper one day and mailed it to her, but did not write a word. The next day I got a poem back in the same way. There was not a line, but I studied the handwriting on the envelope and located it. Then at the Sunday-school picnic she came up and pinned a little bunch of wild violets on my coat. I was the biggest fellow in the woods the rest of the day. I pushed the swing for her an hour and didn't mind it, and my feet hardly touched the ground. For a week afterwards I didn't get mad even at that big mule team which I've been wanting the colonel to sell for a year.

"But you remember that evening that I came

home from the creek with my clothes all wet? Well, that afternoon when I was sitting on the bank fishing, who should come down on the other side of the creek but Sadie McNeil—their house is a quarter of a mile above. She was singing ‘If a body kiss a body, need a body cry?’ and she did not seem to see me. She started to walk across the foot-log, but when she got to the middle of it, she tumbled in with a scream. I didn’t wait to pull off my boots or anything, but was in after her in a flash. I got hold of her around the waist and she got me around the neck, and I soon had her landed on her side of the creek. I wiped the water out of her face and she thanked me with all her might, and hurried off home. I think I told you, when I came home with my wet clothes, that I jumped into the water after a fish. That story was a little fishy, but I thought it was all right, for I meant that it was a kind of a mermaid. Anyhow, it was the biggest fish that I ever pulled out of that creek. I felt like a hero, big enough for a novel, and that this was a romance of the first water. I was sure that it would wind up in matrimony.”

“How deep was the water where Sadie fell in?”

“Oh, it was only about knee-deep. I took that all in afterwards. I got to thinking about it in the night, and I remembered that the poem which Sadie sent me told about a lover plunging into

the surf at a summer resort, and saving a young heiress and marrying her. And it came over me that Sadie had made up her mind that that thing could be done in this neck of the woods as well as down at Long Branch, that it was just as easy as falling off a log. I guess girls are the same everywhere. Sadie knew that the water was not very deep there, and she was laughing a little when I wiped the water from her face. But I thought that if she liked me well enough to fall into the water to get me to help her out, it was a bigger demonstration than if it had happened by accident. Anyhow, it made plain sailing for both of us, and now she is my Sadie and I am her Sammy."

"But you are too young to marry, Sammy; you will not be twenty-one until next summer."

"That's so, but I want to get it all fixed up, and have it come off about Christmas. It would be so nice to watch the young turkeys growing up for a big wedding dinner, and how nice it will be to go around here all summer with people looking at me and saying, 'He is going to marry Squire McNeil's daughter!'"

"Between you and the turkeys there would be a good deal of strutting around here for a great occasion, wouldn't there?"

"I suppose so; but then everybody ought to have one little chance to strut across the stage, with their neighbors for an audience."

"Very true. Still I think you are too young to be thinking about marrying."

"Perhaps I am, but I notice that the fellows that wait so long and go with this girl and then with that one, generally wind up by taking the poorest one in the lot. Your awfully wise young man who is never going to make a mistake, lets his heart get cold and hard, and it don't draw towards his affinity. I'll let my heart out while it's tender and in good working order."

"You must have read that in a book, Sammy. I don't think you thought it out when you were fishing."

"Yes, I guess I did read it. For I've read everything I could find on the subject the last three months. I even wrote to Congressman Clingman to send me a copy of his maiden speech. And one thing certain is that the more I read the more I got struck on Sadie."

Mrs. Hungerford laughed at the sly joke about the maiden speech. She told Sammy she would talk the matter over with the colonel, but that Squire McNeil was likely to have more to say about it than anybody.

"He could say it all, and it wouldn't cost anything for a minister," said Sammy, as he left the room and whistled "Annie Laurie" on the way upstairs.

HE WOULD BE A DETECTIVE.

When Mrs. Hungerford laid Sammy Sudden-drop's case before her husband after his return, he said that it was not the only thing on the boy's mind. He told her that Sammy was possessed of the idea of going to Chicago to learn to be a detective. Ever since he sent him to Millersburg to watch the man from New York he had been reading detective stories and talking about the business.

"Now he has become restless," continued the colonel, "and wants to leave the farm. It is the way with farmer boys. They get tired of following up and down corn rows, of laying up fences when they blow down, and trimming hedges. They read the papers, hear the locomotive whistle, and want to take the train and get away into the world."

"Perhaps it is just as well. For the more machinery we get, the fewer boys we need. For one machine that comes, two boys go. The country gets the self-binder, and the cities get the boys. It does not seem like a good trade—happy, laughing boys for rattling cogwheels and sulky-plows. But this is in an age for machinery, and what else can we do?"

"That is a serious question, but it is general," said Mrs. Hungerford. "Ours is a particular question. What will we do with Sammy?"

"Why not let him go to the city and learn to be a detective, with the agreement that he is not to talk any more about marrying for at least two years?"

"I don't like the business."

"Neither do I, but Sammy Suddendrop does, and he ought to have more to say about it than either of us."

The next evening Mrs. Hungerford said to Sammy: "I bought you a pretty necktie this afternoon. I thought from what you told me last evening that a handsome necktie was a matter of importance to you just now."

"Yes," said Sammy, with a laugh, "I'll dazzle the crowd with that to-night."

"But what is this, Sammy, about your wanting to go to Chicago to be a detective?"

"It's so, I do. That's where the good detectives are, and there are lots of things there to detect."

"I should think so, from the stealing of streets to shoplifting, and from aldermen to sneak-thieves. But why do you want to be a detective?"

"Because it's my nature, I suppose. It's the nature of a hound to run a fox to his hole, and when I hear Bluff and Blow baying along the track of game down there in the woods, I think that's what I would like to do with those cunning

rascals who work in the dark. I would like to chase them to their holes. If I ever get on the track of that rascal from New York I'll give him a lively chase."

"But what about Sadie?"

"Oh, we could fix that up. We can wait a while. If I took on some city airs, she would like me all the better."

"She might be afraid of losing you in a city full of pretty girls."

"Not much. It is Sadie and Sammy forever. I told her so and she believes it."

"Of course she does. What girl wouldn't believe a young man who had saved her from drowning in the raging waters of Willow Creek?

"But then, in your absence some other young man might drive his cutter up to Squire McNeil's gate and take Sadie away to singing school, and in a little while—"

"No, Sadie's Scotch and the Scotch stick. And then I would fire the letters in on her thick and fast."

"Well, Sammy, if you have your heart set on going to Chicago I think it can be arranged, but you are not to marry for two years?"

"No."

An hour later Sammy Suddendrop had taken Sadie McNeil into a cutter drawn by a spirited

pair of young black horses, and as they dashed over the Long Ridge road, snugly tucked away under buffalo robes, he told her that he was going to Chicago and would be gone a good while, but not without coming to see her now and then.

The winds whistled hard through the high hedge, and what more he said or she said nobody heard. But a week later Mrs. Hungerford kissed Sammy good-bye with the tears in her eyes, and Colonel Hungerford drove him down to the station, and he was off to Chicago.

"A pet lamb or a pet dog becomes dear to one," said Mrs. Hungerford, when the young man disappeared down the road; "but a pet boy, taken from the arms of a dying mother—what can be dearer except one's own flesh and blood?"

And then she went to her room, and did not come out for a long time.

In February there was a grand wedding at Captain Clingman's. The captain was rich and he spared no expense to make the marriage between his eldest daughter and the New York journalist the greatest event that the county had seen for many a day. Mildred was a young lady of much popularity, and her numerous friends and the extensive connections of the family filled the great country-house to overflowing. Mr. Stanvelt came from New York to act as best man for Lindell Norwin,

and John Clingman returned from Washington bringing with him a young congressman who was in his regiment at Franklin.

Mrs. Norwin looked radiantly happy as she moved through the great company of guests, notwithstanding the fact that her most intimate friends had believed her disappointed when she learned that it was not to be Colonel Hungerford's daughter.

"Any mother ought to be proud to have such a daughter-in-law as Mildred," she said to Lindell, when they talked the matter over on the first evening of his arrival. "She is such a splendid young woman, and it was so brave in both of them to stay with you in Rome."

And Mr. Stanvelt remarked on the way out: "You have made a fine choice. She is practical as well as beautiful. Highly as I think of Miss Hungerford, she seems a little too ideal. Her splendid conception of things quite dazzles one in conversation. But we cannot always live on the mountain tops. Most of life is mere trudging on common roads, and I don't know how she will get along when it comes to the wear and tear of the commonplace."

Many of Lindell Norwin's friends and neighbors had hardly seen him since he went away to college, and there was a murmur of admiration as

the handsome couple stepped under the arch of smilax and roses to make the irrevocable vows.

"We have given her to you for better or worse," said Mildred's mother as she clasped Lindell's hand; "may it always be for better."

"They have given you one of the most beautiful and dearest of daughters," said his mother; "may you make her one of the happiest wives."

The next morning Daisy said: "I don't know why the winds moaned so piteously in the trees last night. It made me feel bad for Mildred."

"The old trees are sighing over her departure," said her father. "For every summer since she was a baby and threw her little arms up in glee when she saw their branches waving above her, the old trees have watched her come and go."

"I wonder if the trees smile and laugh and sigh and weep," said Daisy, "when they see babies grow and marry and die and sleep."

"I always have a sense of the pathos of life," replied her father, "when I see a tree greeting the fresh winds of spring and putting out its leaves, long after the man that planted it is in his grave."

But Mildred, undisturbed by sighing shade trees or Daisy's little fit of melancholy, and one of the happiest of brides, was far away on the train, flying to the flowers and soft winds of the South.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. HUNGERFORD'S SAD DREAM.

"Do you believe in presentiments, or dreams?" asked Mrs. Hungerford of her husband as they drove home from church together on a Sunday in May.

"I have never had dreams which troubled me enough to make me think about them. But according to the Scripture lesson this morning Pilate's wife was wiser in her dreams than Pilate was with both eyes open on the judgment seat."

"I have never paid any attention to dreams either, but two nights ago I had one which troubled me and does not go away. When I heard the Scripture lesson this morning it disturbed me more than ever.

"I dreamt that we were sitting together on the portico in the dusk of the evening, and while you were talking to me about the trouble with the miners, Elwood came out of the shadows and approached us with the old smile on his face, but when I turned to clasp him in my arms he went away, and you went away with him.

"I called to you, but you did not answer. For hours I sat and waited for you, but you did not come."

"Dreams are echoes of the day. The trouble brewing at the mines disturbed your sleep. It does mine at least. For matters get worse instead of better. That's something real, not a dream."

"Dropping the dream, then, what is the matter with the miners? Are not our men satisfied?"

"Satisfied? As the old colored woman said, that is a long, deep word. Nobody is satisfied. If a farmer has one farm he wants two; if a lawyer is making five thousand a year, he wants to make ten or go to Congress. If he gets into the House, he wants to go to the Senate, then he sets himself up for a favorite son and wants to be made president. If a physician has patients enough to keep him busy all day, he wants enough more to keep him up all night. When a merchant makes a million, he wants two million; and when a multi-millionaire gets a big corner of the earth, then his daughter wants a titled husband. And so it goes. Even the ministers have it. The pastor of a country cross-roads church wants a church in town. In town he wants a church in the city, and if his salary is two thousand he wants five thousand. But they preach patience and contentment to the rest of us. It would be amusing if it were not something else,

to hear a man at five thousand a year preaching contentment to men working for a dollar a day."

"But don't we give our men as good wages as others, and treat them nicely?"

"Yes, but the doctrine of equality which this country started out with in the Declaration of Independence is a hard doctrine to get along with. Nothing sounds nicer in a political creed, and nothing is more provoking in practice. We proclaim it at the top of our voices on the Fourth of July and fight it all the rest of the year.

"Once we thought that equality meant a chance for all to run in the race, or fight in the battle. But now there is a growing class who say that this only means that the race is to the swift, and the battle to the strong, that equality must be a more equal division of the products of labor. A scramble in which the strong get millions, and the weak a crust of bread, is heathenism or worse, not Christian equality.

"Suppose that we tell our men that we are giving them fair wages; they reply: 'But you send your daughters to Europe and ours have to hire out as servants in the kitchen. Why don't you get along with a little less, and give us a little more?'

"And why don't we? That is the question that my conscience often asks me. Why should our

daughter and Clingman's daughter have every advantage, and the daughters of the man that digs the coal that helps to pay the bills have no advantages? Perhaps you can answer the question, but I give it up."

"But these men drink and carouse and waste their means."

"I know that. All the changes have been rung on that argument, and it gives me considerable comfort when my conscience troubles me. But the workmen themselves coolly ignore that fact, or say that drinking is an effect of poverty, not a cause—an argument which must be highly satisfactory to the devil; and many of them reason as if they thought there should be a condition of affairs in this world which would permit a man to spend his wages in the saloon and at the same time put pictures and carpets in his house."

"But what is the bottom of this trouble at the mines?"

"A cheaper man, the bottom of all labor troubles. The man who is above the laboring man could never lower his wages, if it was not for the man who is below him and cuts underneath, I mean underbids him. It is this cheaper man who is lowering wages in America. First, it was the Irishman, who could live in a shanty, and the American wanted a nice cottage. Then it was the

Bohemian, whose wife and children gathered up a living for the family. Now it is the Hun and the Italian, who can live on refuse, and consequently work for lower wages than anybody above them.

"And below them is all China. The possibilities of low wages seem bottomless. We have built walls to shut out cheap goods, but cheap labor slips in.

"Our trouble is just this; some Italians came along, and Clingman and Culverwell insisted on hiring a few of them at lower wages. They did not lower the wages of the other men, but they have struck because they say that if they don't make a stand now they will be dropped one by one and the cheaper men slipped in. Our superintendent did not take any of the Italians, but our men are in the dumps because they see that I cannot long run a mine at higher wages than my neighbors.

"I have urged Clingman and Culverwell and the other operators to discharge the men and end the trouble, but they say that competition is close, that cheap labor is coming in everywhere, and we will all soon be shut out of the general market if we don't take time by the forelock. It is hard to fight a system of things. A man in business these days is like a cog in a wheel, he cannot do much more than go around with the machine. I

should like to strike myself, strike against this awful human machine called the business world, and run our mines on the same principles that we raise corn. The farmer is about the only man who has any independence, and he thinks that he is the worst abused man in the world.

"But I dread to-morrow. Miners always seem to be worse after Sunday."

"Just as other people are who go to saloons instead of to church."

A MINING HORROR.

At sunrise the next morning Colonel Hungerford mounted his horse and rode rapidly away to his mines, which were on Coal Creek, three miles distant. When he reached the works he found them deserted. The few women and children that were left told him that there was great excitement at Culverwell's mine across the creek. Turning his horse in that direction, he galloped through the bottom and across the bridge, where he met his superintendent. The latter told him that in a conference on Sunday afternoon his men refused to go on with the strike on the ground that he had not hired any of the cheaper men, and that they ought to stand by him. He said Culverwell had persuaded half of his men to begin work again, but the other half threatened serious trouble if they

did. More Italians had come in on Saturday, and they were behaving very ugly towards him because he refused to employ Italians. At four o'clock in the morning a half-dozen of Culverwell's men had gone down the lower shaft and begun work. But at five there was a terrific explosion, which set the shaft on fire, and the men, if not killed or suffocated, were imprisoned below. He thought the explosives were put there during the night, but by whom, or how they were started, he did not know. Colonel Hungerford hurried on and was soon in the midst of the excited throng around the burning shaft. All the miners and farmers in the neighborhood were there, and Culverwell had just jumped from his foaming horse. The wives of the men below were pleading piteously with him to try to save their husbands.

"I am awful glad you have come, Colonel," said Culverwell. "What shall we do?"

"There is only one thing to do, and that is go down the upper shaft and dig through to save the men, if alive."

"But it is very dangerous," cried a half-dozen voices. "Nobody has been down that shaft for six months."

"Who will volunteer to go down the old shaft?" shouted Culverwell.

"It has gas in it, and caved in on the last man

that ever was at the bottom of it," was the only reply.

"Tom," said Colonel Hungerford, "we have faced fire and smoke together before, and are not afraid of danger where there is a duty to be done. We will go down. Rig up the windlass, men, and get your picks and shovels ready for business."

Colonel Hungerford was a man for an emergency, a leader whom a crowd always obeyed when his voice rang out in command. And the men fell to with alacrity, but with the hardest work it was an hour before everything was ready. Then, after putting his own most trusty men at the ropes to stand guard around the shaft, Colonel Hungerford stepped into the lift and Culverwell followed.

"Lower away slowly," he said. "One stroke on the rope will mean that we are all right, two will mean to draw us up quickly." And they began to descend.

The crowd became hushed, the weeping women brushing away their tears and peering down the dark shaft. The two men seemed to the breathless throng to be gone an age, but the signal of one stroke came regularly.

"It would be awful to lose Colonel Hungerford in this trap," said one of the men. An Italian scowled. Then came two strokes, and the men fell to and pulled the lift rapidly to the top. There

was a wild shout, and the crowd pressed close up to the shaft.

"We think the men may be alive," said Colonel Hungerford. "We thought we could hear a striking on the wall. We must dig through it."

This announcement was greeted with tremendous cheers. The colonel continued:

"We can work in the shaft for half an hour at a time, in relays of six. Get yourselves in line and be ready when your turn comes. Not a minute must be lost until we have our fellow men out of danger. Mr. Culverwell and myself will go down with the first relay."

"We are with you," shouted the men. And three at a time the first relay went down. For hours the work went on, the men digging fiercely into the thick seam of coal and rock which separated them from the chamber or shaft into which the unfortunate miners were supposed to have retreated.

At noon Mrs. Hungerford drove up rapidly, and springing from the carriage, asked eagerly for her husband.

"He is all right, he is all right," the men shouted as eagerly, "and a brave man he is."

And then the distressed wives caught her in their arms and kissed her. A few minutes later the colonel stepped from the lift so begrimed with

coal dust that Mrs. Hungerford hardly knew him. She smiled through her tears, and Tom Culverwell said that he never saw him look that hard after an all-day march on a dusty road or after a battle.

"We won't let you go down any more," said a stalwart miner. "I'll take his turn." A dozen more shouted the same thing. And the colonel let his wife wipe the dust from his face and then sat down with her to watch proceedings.

When the sun was setting he said to her:

"You must go home now. Everything is going well, and if the men are alive we shall have them out and their wives laughing and crying over them by midnight."

Mrs. Hungerford drove away, but came back to the outer edge of the works and beckoned to her husband.

"I feel very strange about leaving you. You will be very careful, won't you?"

"As careful as I can be and save the men."

"You are so noble. I shall go, but kiss me again."

He kissed her. It was the last time.

The relay which came up at ten o'clock reported that they could easily hear the men digging on the other side. At twelve o'clock they were almost through the wall, and an hour later they

brought up two of the men. The miners instantly caught them up and carried them out of the crowd into the fresh air. Then two more were brought up, but the other two could not be found.

After half an hour's fruitless search, Colonel Hungerford and Culverwell went down to assist the men. They found the two miners in a stupefied condition, put them upon the lift and sent them up with the other two men.

There was a deafening shout as these last two appeared.

It was now two o'clock in the morning, and there was nothing to do but lower the lift and bring up the two heroic men.

The lift was nearing the top of the shaft, a strand of the rope parted, then another, and in an instant the lift went crashing down the dark depths of the shaft to the bottom, two hundred feet below. There was a cry of horror. Strong men grew sick and faint and turned away. The women who had watched around the shaft all day shrieked and clasped their hands in wild agony. Captain Clingman attempted to give directions, but his voice choked, and he staggered into the arms of one of the miners.

But Colonel Hungerford's superintendent caught up a crowbar, fastened a rope around it, and seating himself upon it, went quickly down the shaft.

A few minutes later he struck the rope and they drew it up. It bore the lifeless and broken body of Colonel Hungerford. When they lowered it again, it brought up the remains of Culverwell.

The awe-stricken multitude stood uncovered and silent while a few strong men carried the bodies to a neighboring cottage. One of the women, whose husband had been rescued, cried out in agony: "Oh, the poor lady! the poor lady! My husband is saved and hers is gone."

A moment later there was a cry of anger, then a shout for vengeance.

"The Italians cut the strands of the rope," cried the Hungerford miners. "Catch them! Hang them!"

But the superintendent and Captain Clingman threw themselves in front of the infuriated men and besought them not to add further horror to the night by such a deed of violence, when they had no proof of anything more than an accident. The Italians quickly disappeared in the darkness.

But who put the explosives in the mine, or whether the parting of the rope was purely an accident or not, was never known.

When one of the neighbors, who had been selected as the wisest and best man to break the news gently to Mrs. Hungerford, approached the house an hour after the fatal accident, he saw a light in

the parlor window and Mrs. Hungerford pacing the floor. She met him at the door, looked at his blanched face and saw him trying in vain to speak. She staggered back and sank into a chair. He tried again to speak, but the pallor on her face and her agony unnerved him still more. "You need not say anything," she said in a hoarse whisper, "I know that you can only tell me the worst. My dream was true."

And thus Colonel Hungerford and Lieutenant Culverwell, whose lives were so strangely connected, died together. In deeds of bravery they were side by side, in character they were separated by a great gulf.

CHAPTER XIX.

HELEN TAKES HOLD OF BUSINESS.

THE cablegram announcing the death of her father did not reach Helen until ten days after the sad calamity. It was directed to her address in London, but she had left two days before for Oxford, Leamington, and Warwick Castle. The sad message was handed to her on her return to her hotel at Leamington, after a visit to Stratford-on-the-Avon. Cabling a reply to her mother, she hurried to Liverpool and took the next steamer for home. When the vessel swung alongside the dock at New York, Mrs. Mildred Norwin met her with letters and a telegram from her mother.

"I shall take you right home with me for the rest of the day," she said, "for the fast train does not leave until ten to-night. Lindell will spend the evening with us."

"You have a beautiful home," said Helen, after she had been shown through the apartments; "you must be very happy."

"I ought to be, with a successful and indulgent husband. But the daily newspaper business is so

relentless, I never seem to have my husband in the evening."

Helen was too much overwhelmed by her great grief to see what was passing in the minds of others, but it could not escape her notice that a slight shadow rested upon the spirits of her dearly loved Mildred.

As the train neared Millersburg Helen felt that quickening pulse-beat which stirs the blood of the one who has wandered over sea and distant lands and at last begins to measure the little remaining space between self and home and loved ones by the strokes of the fast flying wheels. The heart beats faster and faster as the last field is crossed, the last curve rounded, the edge of the town reached, and the whistle sounds, the brakes stop the wheels, and the full stop comes. The journey amid waves and storms and strange people is over, and you are face to face with those dearest to you on earth. Such a moment is like a new morning to the heart.

But there was one whom Helen could not meet. He had gone over the sea which is never recrossed, and the silence of eternity had come between them. It was a great cloud and darkness where for months anticipation pictured joy and gladness.

But in the home was the mother, with deeper lines and traces of a great grief in her face, and

yet resolute to be a shield and comfort to her sobbing child.

For days they struggled together, with words and looks and kindly ministrations, to rise above the great calamity and to adjust their hearts to the sore trial.

At length Helen said:

"There is in death a stroke of calamity which we cannot reason away. The shadow falls, the earth opens and closes, and they are gone. No words that we can speak or thoughts that we can think will ever satisfy all the hunger that we feel when we think of the place which they have left voiceless, formless, empty. 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.' Until that last day he will bruise all hearts and bruise them sorely.

"But our beloved dead was noble in life. He has left us a name crowned with honor. The flowers which the multitude heaped upon his grave are withering, but in the hearts of the givers his memory cannot wither. He stood in his place and did his work with the fidelity and the earnestness of a royal manhood.

"I cannot stand in the thick of battle as he stood, or have the voice in public affairs which he had, but I can do some of the commonplace duties of the farm and the mines to which he gave himself so patiently and faithfully. I want you to let

me take up his work here. It will help us both to bear our sorrow."

"He was a man, and you are still a very young woman, but do whatever you wish, my child."

This was the mother's only word, and Helen Hungerford was soon busy with the affairs of the farm and the mines. In the morning she went over the fields or remained in the library; and every afternoon she drove or rode to the works on Coal Creek. Here she gave a part of her time to business with the superintendent, and the rest to the families of the miners. She went from house to house encouraging the miners, she formed a sewing school for their girls, an improvement club for the young people, a band of hope for the children and a Sunday-school for all. When one of the women who lived in a wretched little house told her that drink was the trouble, she vowed in her heart that the drink habit would have to get out of Coal Creek some day, but said nothing.

After a long interview with Captain Clingman, which was somewhat stormy on his part, and very determined on her part, though her words were spoken in the rich, soft tones which gave so much charm to all her conversation, it was agreed that the Italians who had caused the great calamity should receive the same wages as the others, and that the wages of all should be raised ten per cent after the holidays.

"What do you want to raise them for?" he asked impatiently.

"Because they are not enough."

"It is all they can get anywhere else."

"But it is not all we can afford to give."

"I don't know about that."

"I do. Of course we shall not make so much money, but it is not necessary that we should get very rich."

"Well, if you want to raise the wages of your hands, go ahead and do it, but I don't want to do it for mine."

"But I want you to do it, for it will be easier if you join in the movement, and in the long run better for you. If you consent, I will prevail upon the administrator of the Culverwell estate to do the same."

"Just so; you will argue him out of his senses as you are doing me. There is Judge Barrier and the railroad company; they hire Italians at lower wages, and they will undersell us in the market."

"Not if we are content with less profit. And I think we can get along with less. It hurts me to go into these people's homes and see how poor they are, and then go back to my own home where there is so much more than we need."

"Helen Hungerford, you are too good. You won't do for business."

But after another hour of argument and pleading the agreement was made and the wages were raised.

When Captain Clingman told Judge Barrier about it a day or two afterwards, he said: "You were very, very foolish to make the agreement. What did you do it for?"

"Because I couldn't help myself. Did you ever talk with Miss Hungerford?"

"No."

"Well, if you did, I believe she would argue some of the deviltry even out of you. What with those earnest eyes looking at you, a smile playing across her lips, and that musical voice, she just melts the meanness right down in you. Besides, Mrs. Clingman and the girls stand in with her and always second her motions. But the next time she calls to see me on business I won't be at home."

But the "young lady superintendent," as Captain Clingman now called her, put no farther strain on the captain's liberality until June, when she proposed a Saturday half-holiday. There was little or no prospective loss in this proposition, but with the usual dread of concessions which makes the capitalist or operator fear that any little "let-up" on labor will let down the whole system of things, he was disposed to hold out against it. John Clingman had just returned from Europe, where he went

at the close of the session, and as the captain was taking him out home to supper one evening he said:

"Jack, if you are going to marry Helen Hungerford, I wish you would do it soon and take her out of the coal business."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"Only another little scheme. But it's always some little scheme. You have seen your mother unraveling an old stocking. That is what Helen Hungerford is always doing with the old system of things. She has been coming out to Coal Creek nearly a year now, and you would hardly know the place or people. She has pulled out old boards and put in new ones until one shanty don't know another, and the dogs jump over the wrong fences. The people even keep their faces clean, and they don't drink half as much whisky as they used to. There is only one saloon left now, and they say she intends to have that out of there before Christmas."

HOW SHE CAPTURED THE PEOPLE.

"How did she bring it all about?"

"Oh, visited them, patted the children on the cheeks, carried a basket of apples or plums with her every afternoon in the fall, and now it is roses. If you were out there of a Sunday morning you

would think that the boys and girls had all just come from a conservatory or flower-show. They all have button-hole bouquets.

"She persuaded two or three of the smartest boys to go to an academy, and I suspect helped them some. She has clubs and societies. One young fellow is president of one thing, and another of something else, and the girls are secretaries, and half the town is on committees. If a woman is sick she puts her in her buggy and has her boy give her a good ride. That pair of black horses has hauled more women and babies up and down the Coal Creek road than any dozen teams in the country. The people over there just idolize her. She can get them to do anything she wants them to do. She told them to fence in their back yards and raise vegetables, and every fellow did it. She told them to fish on Saturday afternoon instead of Sunday, and to go to Sunday-school and church, and, you wouldn't believe it, but most of them did it. She told the young fellows to stop wasting their money and to lay it up to get married, and that is what they are doing now. She has started a penny savings bank after a plan that she saw somewhere in Europe, and she has a little co-operative store, a big reading room, and a half-dozen other things. You never saw such a girl. She goes about it as if she was born for it. And

I guess she was. She seems to have her father's power of command and her mother's power of persuasion.

"They say that she made a speech to the men on Decoration Day, but whether she did or not, that will be the next thing."

"And the thing is spreading. Your sisters are full of it. May has been appointed county superintendent or something for the Sunday-school Union, and she is organizing Sunday-schools, and Daisy goes over to our mine and takes the children out riding. A lot of the Millersburg women have the craze too, and are doing all sorts of nice things. I tell you, Jack, Helen Hungerford's style is all the fad now. She is classical, you know, is traveled, speaks French, and is handsome and an heiress. What she says goes. If she had set the pace the other way and gone to balls, all the young folks would be dancing. But she has a pious strain, and now it's all the rage to go to church and do good."

"You are cynical, father; but why do you object to it?"

"I don't object to that. It's all right, and I am proud of her. It is the way she wants to do business that makes me tired. She wants to raise wages and give half-holidays and things of that kind."

"Have you lost money by the raise?"

"No, we have not lost money, but we have not made as much as we might. We have sold more coal, but the profit has been less."

"But you have no trouble with the men?"

"No, but if she was out of the business we would form a combination of all the mines—a thing her father always opposed—and then we could dictate terms to miners and consumers."

"It is a good thing, then, that she is in the business, for I don't like to see things get where neither the working man nor the public can bend things. It means that sooner or later they will break them. When it comes to conflicting interests, there must be compromises or there will be a smash up. You have grown gray in business, and she has only a girl's head on her shoulders, but it seems to be a mighty level head."

"Of course, Jack, of course, you are bound to think her head level, but the trouble with me is that I have never been headed that way. I have always gone on the principle of looking out for number one, and just now, Jack, you are looking out for number two."

Jack laughed heartily at his father's sally. The boy came down to the gate and took charge of the horses, while the young congressman threw himself down on the grass under a shade tree and was as happy as a boy from school.

A month later came the great strike of 1877. Bursting out like a volcano in the mountains of Pennsylvania, and swallowing up vast amounts of property in flame, it swept over the country, carrying consternation everywhere.

When the storm reached the miners at Coal Creek, they threw down their tools and refused to work.

"We will wait until it is over," they said; and then they gathered in groups and discussed matters, but kept quiet.

The next morning, however, a sheriff's guard was put over the property of the railroad company. It angered the men, and an agitator began to harangue them with incendiary speeches. The crowd increased, and with it the threats of violence. Just as it happened in so many other places during that dangerous crisis, men seemed to spring out of the ground. Who they were or where they came from was a mystery. And almost as inexplicable was the passion which seized upon great classes of men who had no particular grievances. It was a strange fire which seemed to light up the wrath of the whole labor element of the land. And this fire, sweeping through the excited multitudes at Coal Creek, soon broke into an angry storm. There was a rush for Judge Barrier's works, and the office, sheds and other buildings were instantly de-

molished. Next, the mob moved toward the railroad to fire the depot and other property. The sheriff's posse was helpless and beat a retreat.

"Oh, for an hour of Colonel Hungerford!" groaned one of the citizens.

Captain Clingman rode among the men and besought them not wantonly to destroy property. "It will do you no good," he said, "and do us all much harm."

"That is what we want, to do you harm," was the angry reply. But his own men surrounded his horse and conducted him safely away.

Then there was a stir and a shout on the outer edge of the crowd, and the leader of the mob said in a low tone to the vicious looking men around him: "There comes the girl superintendent. If she gets in here and talks to these men, this thing will all be over with. Catch her horses and lead them away."

As the well-known black horses dashed up, the leaders of the mob sprang through the surging throng and clutched at the reins. The Hungerford and Clingman miners rushed forward and there was a struggle around the carriage. The horses became frightened, reared and plunged, and whirling around, overturned the vehicle. A strong miner caught Helen in his arms, and when the horses were quieted, helped her back into the carriage. She waved her hand for silence.



"You are men. All I ask of you to-day is to be manly."—Page 219.

"You have got to hear her," shouted the men around her. "For she is our friend if anybody is."

"You are men," she said. "All I ask of you today is to be manly. But burning buildings and destroying property is not manly. It is wanton wickedness. I have been your friend, but I shall swear in court against every man that applies the torch."

"Put her out. Take her away," angrily cried the leader of the mob.

"Who is that man?" said the resolute young woman. "What has he done for you? What can he do for you? You know who I am and who my father was. Was he your enemy?"

"No, no," thundered the crowd.

"Have I been your enemy?"

"No, no," they shouted again. "You are the best friend the miners ever had."

"Then hear me."

And they did hear her. At her call a majority of the men came forward and volunteered to join the sheriff's posse in standing guard over Judge Barrier's and the railroad company's property. The storm passed away, and in a few days the men were all at work and the trains were all running.

After that there were no more contemptuous remarks, even in Judge Barrier's office, about the "young coal baroness out at Coal Creek."

John Clingman could not resist the temptation to turn the laugh on his father, and to tell him that in the business of managing mobs woman seemed to be the coming man.

"Yes, she has converted me," was the reply. "Hereafter I'll do whatever she says. If she asks me to give every baby born on Coal Creek a pair of golden slippers, I'll do it."

"She will have you an elder in her young church out there, the first thing you know."

CHAPTER XX.

AN IRISH ORATOR TURNS HIS BATTERIES AGAINST HELEN.

THERE was nothing aristocratic about the saloon at Coal Creek. It kept no oleanders in front, had no green screens and no pictures on the walls, and served no hot lunches. But it had the infinite attraction of all saloons, whisky and beer. Many reasons are given to explain why men go to saloons. The real reasons are in bottles and barrels.

And being a saloon, it was a fixture and a power. Other forms and implements of evil have to go. But the saloon stands like Gibraltar. It enjoys the unique position of being watched over, patronized and petted by the guardians of the laws which it violates, and of being most loved by its worst victims.

It was no wonder, therefore, that Helen Hungersford found the closing up of the last saloon at Coal Creek the most difficult undertaking which she had attempted. It held on and flourished, and the proprietor and patrons laughed at her benevolent schemes of reform. The old topers who

lolled on the rough benches under the shade trees of the "Tired Man's Rest," as it was called, looked sleepily up at the black horses and the young lady as she went by, winked at one another, and "allowed" that if "Moike's place" was an eyesore to the girl coal-operator, she would have sore eyes all the rest of her days.

But after long conferences among temperance workers, it was determined to make another effort under the local option law. Other townships in the county had been carried under this law, and although twice defeated in Coal Creek Township, Helen prevailed upon the temperance people to try it again.

"I want you to help us," she said to John Clingman one evening when he had called. "You can do more for us than anybody else."

"Perhaps I can do something for you, but you know what it will mean for me. The whole liquor interest of the district will be arrayed against me when the time comes for reëlection next year. If you strike one saloon, you strike the whole business, and they all hold together. With the saloon there is no politics but whisky, and with liquor dealers there is only one party and that is the liquor party. It is more than some of these fellows can well stand now that I never drink. Another straw will break the camel's back."

"But you believe in backbone and grit. And I do not think they can turn you down, as the phrase goes. You are too strong, too popular with fathers, mothers, young people and all good people."

"But the mothers and the nice young women don't vote, and only votes count. You are running a farm and a coal mine, and employing men and all that kind of thing, but when election day comes, all you can do is to ride up and ask how the election is going, while your twenty-one-year-old driver gets out and votes. Women may want to reform politics and put down the whisky power and all that, but on the greatest day of the year they have to stand still and see the procession go by."

"No, I can do more than that. If I can persuade you to make a speech or two for us, that will be worth more than my vote a score of times. I am not sure that women need to vote, but we do need to be powerfully persuasive. You will make the speeches, won't you?"

"I shall see."

And he did see. For when his two sisters told him that they had "enlisted for the war" and wanted him to be a captain, he gave way and said that he would be on hand whenever called for.

The election was set for a special day in October, and early in September the campaign was

warm. Helen devoted herself to the meetings held in schoolhouses, and to kind attentions to the miners' families. But she soon found a formidable enemy in a young Irishman who had the humor, eloquence and cunning of speech which have so distinguished his people. He generally carried the crowd with him wherever he appeared.

He would say in his jolly Irish way:

"The young leddy tells yez not to sphind your money for dhrink. But we all has our ways of sphindin' money. Sha goes over the saa and sphinds hers and I sphinds moine gethin' half-saas over. It's all a mather of taiste. Sha drisses in good taiste, and I dhrinks what taistes good. Sha loikes an oystrich fither, and I loikes a gin cocktail. The fither makes her look pritty and the cocktail makes me fale good. Sha goes aroond tratin' yez all noicely, and I trates yez all aroond. Betwane us yez gits noice tratement. I'm not afther boastin' of mesilf, but I'm a little loike Hilin. Whin sha mates the ould woman, sha smoiles in her swate way and siz, 'Good mornin', Mrs. Flannigan.' And whin I mates the ould man I siz in me bland way, 'Good mornin', Mr. Flannigan, hev a smoile,' and me smoile costs more than her smoile, and goes firther down. Sha kisses the baby gerrels, and I kisses them too—whin they are oulder. Sha is a swate leddy, a good leddy."

Whin poor Mrs. Flaherty was doyin' sha was up with her all noight. Bat whin sha was dhead, dhidn't I sit up all noight, and wasn't it the biggest wake iver hild on Coal Creek? Dhidn't Moike till all his custimers the next dhay that it bate them all?

"Sha's a noice leddy, a pritty leddy. I've nothin' agin her. All the ither saints be prazed for St. Hilin. But sha don't know how much good the crayther does yez. Sha droives a foine kirridge and dhon't git toired. But yez works in the moines all dhay, and then whin yez comes out toired yez goes to the Toired Man's Rist, and gits risted. A waa ddrop is mighty comfortin'. It warrums yez and makes yez fale bether. Faith, and we're not afther the dhrink, but nature's afther it.

"If St. Hilin dhon't want to dhrink, sha naden't. Nobbody's coaxin' of her to dhrink, and nobbody wants to saa her black horses sthand in front of Moike's. But in a fra counthry you poor craythers moight be lift a place where you can git a waa ddrop. It's fradom we're afther. It's the Diclarashun of Independence that I'm defindin'. Hale Columby! Plurybus Unum!"

After this outburst of eloquent patriotism the crowd cheered for Jemmy O'Brien, and all went over to Mike's place.

Jemmy's popularity made him bold, and he spread the word that he was going to be at the

big temperance rally which was soon to be held in the big grove down Coal Creek. He boasted that he would challenge the speakers for a joint debate. When Helen heard of it, she sent him word that he would be welcome and that he might look for one of her buggies to take him to the picnic grounds.

But on the morning of the meeting Jemmy began to brace up with corn juice, and by noon he was under a shade tree alongside of the road, in a drunken sleep. Helen's driver, who was sent for him, reported the fact, but she told him to get some help, put Jemmy in the carriage and bring him along.

When Jemmy arrived she said, "Mr. O'Brien has advertised that he would be one of the speakers here to-day, and I am helping him to keep his engagement. Would you like to hear him now?"

But Mr. O'Brien was snoring on the soft cushion of the phaeton.

"He is too tired to speak now," said a voice.
"Let him go back to the Tired Man's Rest."

"He is too full for utterance," exclaimed another.

"Three cheers for Jemmy O'Brien," cried another. "He has made the best temperance speech of the day."

Three cheers were given, and Jemmy was sent home in the phaeton.

The next day he swore that he would get even

with that "Temperance Terror," who wanted to make everybody eat and drink in her way. But the miners guyed him so much that he shook Coal Creek dust from his feet and hunted work in quarters where girl operators were not known.

By a close vote local option was adopted. Not long afterwards Mike had to close up and follow Jemmy. And then the old topers had to walk to Millersburg for their drinks.

Captain Clingman called Helen's attention to the result, with the remark that they got it anyhow. She replied that she expected as much, but that there was a great difference between making an old toper walk far and hunt hard for his whisky, and throwing saloons wide open to tempt all the young men and boys in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER XXI.

SHE MARRIED ANOTHER MAN.

THE day before Christmas Sammy Suddendrop came home for a visit. He was dressed nobbily, had succeeded well with the cultivation of a brown mustache, and looked smart and had an air of business. It was six months since his last visit, and he asked numerous questions about the neighbors.

"I have bad news to tell you," said Mrs. Hungerford, after she had told him all the other news she could think of. "Sadie McNeil is to be married to-morrow."

Sammy's chin dropped and his eyes opened and looked large.

"Yes, a natty young man came here to teach school last September, and he soon met Sadie. They say it was a case of love at first sight."

"I didn't think Sadie would treat me that way after plunging into the deep to save her life. I wish I had let the little flirt drown."

"Oh, no, Sammy, but a detective ought to have detected her waning affection."

"I did think it was cooling off. She stopped writing so often, but she said she had begun the study of the romance literatures, whatever they are, and was very busy. A month ago she wrote that she had a lot of dressmaking on hand, and I must not expect many more letters from her before the holidays."

"She told the truth. She has been very busy making dresses, Sammy."

"There was nothing slow about the young fellow, was there? What's his name?"

"Winthrop C. Fellows. Here is one of the wedding cards."

"What is that you say?" said Sammy, jumping out of his chair and half-way across the room. "Winthrop C. Fellows? Has he brown hair, and a brown mustache, and a fair face?"

"Yes."

"The deuce! I would like to kick myself clear out of the front gate."

"Oh, don't do that, Sammy, for my sake. But what is the matter?"

"Why, do you know, I found that fellow on the street in Chicago one day, dead broke. He had come from the East to make his fortune, but his spoke in the wheel didn't come up, and he got out of money and out at the elbows, and looked as if all his friends were dead. We meet lots of such

fellows, but he seemed to be a nice young man and I took to him and helped him a little. He came to the office several times, and one day he said that he had run the town over, and couldn't get anything to do. He was sick and tired of the struggle, he said, and had about made up his mind to go and throw himself into the Chicago River.

"Don't do that," I said. "The water smells bad, and you might catch cold. I know a thing that is worth a dozen of that. Go out into the country and get a school. You are smart and well educated, and can get a good school. They will board you at some nice farmer's and you will have fried chicken every day. Besides, as handsome a fellow as you are could soon capture some farmer's pretty daughter—the woods are full of them—and get settled down on a farm. That would be lots better than to be fished out of the Chicago River, hauled off to the morgue, and have people come and look at your white face, and the coroner sit on you."

"He said he would try it, if he only had money enough to get a decent suit of clothes.

"So I loaned him twenty-five dollars, and sent him off as nobby as if he had just come out of a bandbox. He was to send back the money when he got his first installment of salary, and he did. But he took good care not to send his letter from

Millersburg. He headed it up, 'First Station on the Way to Blooming Success;' then slipped it into the mail car.

"But just to think that it was my borrowed money that helped him to break into my best girl's heart! I suppose it's poetic justice or something that way. I kept those two people from being drowned, and now here they are gliding blissfully down the river of time together, while I stand on the bank and see them go by. I wish I had sent him up to North Dakota and let the blizzards blow him away."

"Don't worry, Sammy; there are more good fish in the river than were ever caught out of it."

"That may be so, but I won't do any more fishing in this creek. I'll fall back on some Chicago millionaire's daughter."

"I presume that there are plenty of millionaires' daughters on Michigan Avenue just sighing for Sammy Suddendrop to drop in."

"Yes, hundreds of them. But was it because of Sadie's wedding that Helen wrote me to be sure and come home to-day?"

"No, there is some other bad news. That old trouble about the farm has taken a bad turn. Some important papers, they say, have been discovered, and we want you to go to New York for us immediately."

"The heirs of Mr. Jones, who once owned this property, say that he died believing that he owned a section of farming land and a half-section of other land on which there was supposed to be coal, all in this township, that he spoke to the executor of the will about it a few days before his death. In his will he speaks of his land in this county in a general way, along with some other lands in the state. But when the executor wrote on here about it, the county recorder answered that Mr. Jones had no land here at the time of his death, that the records showed that it had all been sold previously. The executor thought that as Mr. Jones had other lands in the West, he had made a mistake about it, and let it pass. But the heirs were never satisfied, and off and on kept stirring the matter up. Recently they learned that about the time Mr. Jones was supposed to have transferred his lands, two swindlers were operating in this county, that they forged deeds to the property of non-residents and then sold the land to others. They have become persuaded that our land was one of the tracts which these swindlers operated on.

"Now these men were my father's neighbors, and when that man was here from New York I told Mr. Hungerford all about them, but he did not think there was any connection between the two things.

"Their names were Dorset and Barney. The latter went to the penitentiary and the other disappeared, and neither has been seen since that time. But one of Dorset's family is still living near my old home in New York State.

SOME FINE DETECTIVE WORK.

"Now we want you to go to New York City, and, if you think best, to my old home, and pick up all the facts you can. The case will probably come up in the spring term of court, for we understand that they are about to begin suit."

Sammy Suddendrop was soon off to New York, and four weeks later returned. He said that he had found the man in New York who had paid them a visit some four years before, that his name was Shirley, and his business that of a gambler and confidence man. With the help of the New York detectives he had put himself in friendly relations with Shirley and developed an interesting line of information, all of which he could not make known then. But through Shirley he learned that Barney, after leaving the penitentiary, kept a gambling establishment in New York until his death, and that he was the source of Shirley's knowledge about the land titles. "Barney told Shirley that they did forge the deed to the section and a half of land owned by Mr. Jones and after-

wards sold to Mr. Hungerford. What is worse, Shirley claims that he now has the copy of the forged deed and that it will be used in evidence in the trial, and that the signature will show that it is a forgery."

"Why, then, did he tell us that the heirs were disputing our claim to the property on the ground that the wife of Jones refused to sign the deed?" asked Mrs. Hungerford.

"Because at one time there was such a dispute, and for some reason or other Shirley did not seem ready at that time to spring the other matter. There is something there that has not yet been developed, a string that has not been pulled to the end. But this is certain, what Shirley wanted of Colonel Hungerford was money. He was trying to work him up to buying off his evidence. And he says that he did not leave Millersburg until he got a thousand dollars, but not from Colonel Hungerford."

"Who from?"

"Captain Clingman."

"For what?"

"Never mind about that now; let me go on with the story. I also learned from Shirley that Barney told him that Dorset was not lynched, as was reported at the time, but that he escaped and went to the Pacific coast, and was seen there after-

wards by one of Barney's gambling friends who knew him. Then I went to Dorset's old home, and through the postmaster discovered that letters had passed between the remaining members of his family and a little town in Washington Territory. By the help of a servant in the family I got the name of the town. And now I am going there."

The next morning, while Mrs. Hungerford was busy with household affairs, Sammy said to Helen in the parlor: "I have unpleasant news for you."

"About whom or what?"

"About Lindell Norwin. He is drinking badly, and running down-hill fast. His friends say that he was so brilliant and such jolly good company that the club men took to him, and he got in with a fast set, who led him on at a great pace.

"I did not see him or Mildred, but was told that she was a very sad young woman and was seldom seen out of her home. They have taken cheaper apartments and he is likely to lose his place any day."

Helen leaned over on the table with her face in her hands, and when she looked up again there were tears in her eyes, and she said in a husky voice:

"Poor Mildred! So sweet and good, and a blight upon her life before she has been married two years! But, Sammy, for my love of her don't tell this."

The trip to Washington Territory took two months, and as Sammy had said when leaving that he would not write, because he did not want letters from that quarter to come to the Millersburg post-office, the time seemed long. It was a great relief to Mrs. Hungerford and Helen when they saw him walking briskly up from the gate, and they listened eagerly to his story, when he had finished his supper and they were once more in the parlor together.

"I found the man," he said, with professional pride and boyish enthusiasm. "Far back in the territory, in a little town at the foot of the mountains I found him; an old man, gray and bent, and very poor. But there was no word against him in the town; all the neighbors said he was a nice old man. But it was nearly a month before I could do anything with him. He was shy and shrewd and reticent. But at last I concluded to be more frank with him, and to come out openly about the matter. I told him that I knew who he was and about his past history, but did not intend to get him into any trouble, but to get others out of trouble. I askd him if he remembered Frances Elwood, and then I told him all about your marriage to the colonel and his career as a soldier and his death. I also explained the trouble which you are now in about the land.

"The tears came in the old man's eyes, and then as we sat there by the little wood fire, with the winds howling through the pines, he told me the story of his life. It was a sad story, from the time his sins overtook him, as he expressed it.

"Once he stopped and said: 'Young man, don't fool with that text in the Bible, "The way of the transgressor is hard."' His wife got a divorce from him, he said, when she discovered that he had gone wrong. He had never seen any of his children from the day of his arrest. For years he was haunted with fear day and night. The shaking of a twig or rustling of a dry leaf frightened him, nothing that he did prospered, and he was always lonely and homesick. Sometimes he wished that he had gone to the penitentiary and got through with it. But after his escape he had always tried to live a respectable life. Now he was old, and only had a few years more, and it did not make much difference what happened.

"I argued long and hard with him to tell all he knew about this case. I told him that if the Jones heirs had a just claim, you wanted to know it. It was plain that Colonel Hungerford had been an innocent purchaser, but that you wished the right thing done whatever the cost.

"But he held back until I went to the station and did some long telegraphing with our prosecuting

attorney. When I showed him the last telegram, he said he would do all he could to make the matter clear. Then he went to a little pine cupboard in the back of the room and got out an old bundle of yellow documents.

"I carried these papers to the Pacific coast in my valise," he said, "and have kept them for years. At first I thought I might sell them some day, and afterwards I thought they might be needed."

"We looked over the papers. There were some astonishing things in them. They are there in my traveling bag now. The old man himself is in Chicago, where he will be looked after until the trial comes off.

"When will that be?"

"Not until July. At that time John Clingman will be back from Washington. He is to conduct our side of the case."

"John Clingman will be very much surprised before he gets through with it. So will Captain Clingman before it is all over. And there will be such a sensation in Millersburg as that town has not known for many a day."

"You almost frighten me," said Mrs. Hungerford.

"The scare is not on our side."

CHAPTER XXII.

AN EXCITING TRIAL.

IT was the middle of August before the "Honorable Circuit Court" reached the case of the Jones heirs against Mrs. Frances Elwood Hungerford and heirs of Colonel Edward J. Hungerford's estate. No civil case in that court had ever before excited so much interest, and a multitude of spectators gathered in town on the opening day of the trial. Old neighbors and old soldiers were there, both from curiosity and from sympathy. In any case between a neighbor and a resident of a distant city, the neighbor easily gets the big end of the sympathy. But in this case the deep affection of soldiers and citizens for Colonel Hungerford awakened a feeling which was not easily measured.

The plaintiff's attorneys proved by the former executor of the Jones estate, now an old man, that Mr. Jones died believing himself possessed of a section and a half of land in Coal Creek Township, and that when he examined his papers he found the deeds for these two different tracts of

land. But when the county records at Millersburg were examined they showed that the land had been transferred by Jones to a party named Hunter, and he gave it no further attention at the time.

Next the deed from Jones to Hunter was submitted, and Shirley testified that he had secured it from one of Hunter's heirs with whom his papers had been left. Then by comparison with other papers signed by Jones the signature to the deed was shown to be a forgery.

"But," said John Clingman, "this deed bears the notarial seal and signature of William Stanvelt, of the real estate firm of Stanvelt Brothers. Will the witness explain that fact?"

"We shall call another witness to testify on that point," said the plaintiff's attorney.

William R. Stanvelt was then called. Before beginning his testimony he cast a protesting glance at Helen, as if he thought himself about to be used, very much against his will, to help deprive her of her estate. But the calm look of confidence with which she returned his glance relieved him of all embarrassment.

Mr. Stanvelt testified that William Stanvelt was his uncle, that he was now dead, but was a partner in the firm at that time and a notary public. But while this deed bore his notarial seal, the sig-

nature was not his but a forgery. In proof of this, he submitted numerous papers signed by his uncle which showed by comparison that the signature in the acknowledgment was not his. He then explained that a clerk employed by the firm, named Cassidy, had afterwards been found guilty of embezzlement and forgery, and sent to prison. When this deed came to light a year before, it was too late to take action against the offender, as he had already been punished. But Mr. Stanvelt obtained from him a written admission that he had surreptitiously used the seal and appended the signature of William Stanvelt.

"Your Honor," said Clingman, "the evidence of this witness in regard to the admission of the clerk could be objected to on technical grounds, but inasmuch as the defense is after the truth we shall make no objection, but give the witness full liberty."

The old neighbors looked approvingly at Clingman, and quietly remarked to one another that Jack Clingman always was the most straightforward lawyer in the country.

Judge Barrier was then put on the stand, and testified that at the time this transfer was made he was a new arrival in Millersburg and was just beginning his practice in the county. He said that the men who were afterwards known as Dorset

and Barney came into his office one day with a man named Hunter, and made an agreement with him to sell him the Jones lands. The latter paid them some earnest money to bind the transaction, but they did not come in again. But about a month later he learned that a deed had been made to Hunter.

When court adjourned for the day, the old neighbors went home feeling that the New York heirs had made a strong case, and that matters looked dark for Mrs. Hungerford and her daughter.

"Your testimony was pretty hard on us to-day," said Mrs. Hungerford to Mr. Stanvelt, "but we want you to go home with us and accept our hospitality during the remainder of your stay here."

"I shall only be too happy to do so," he replied, "for I have a world of pleasant recollections of Miss Hungerford in Europe, and during the two days that I have been in this little city I have heard so much about her brilliant ability as a business manager, and about her philanthropic schemes, that I should like to have an opportunity to talk such matters over with her."

Mrs. Hungerford took Mr. Stanvelt into the carriage and drove away. But Helen remained for a couple of hours in consultation with John Clingman and Sammy Suddendrop, and then rode home with Sammy.

"Sammy," she said on the way out, "I think Mr. Clingman feels a little uneasy about your witness from Washington. Why didn't you state more frankly what you meant in regard to Judge Barrier, and about the forged title having to find a resting place somewhere?"

"Oh, that will be all plain enough to-morrow," he replied.

"But, Sammy, I think you know that somebody else will get hurt in this matter."

"Well, what if they do? The world is full of aches and pains. It has made my legs ache to run all the way to the Atlantic coast, and then all the way to the Pacific coast and back, over this business. It will be some other man's turn to ache pretty soon. But we are at the gate, and there is your mother at the window looking for you, as she generally is when you are away."

THE OLD WITNESS.

That night there were rumors in the air at Millersburg. A strange old man had come to town as a witness, it was said, and it was two to one that there would be some interesting developments. In the morning the crush in the court room was so great that most of the country people could get no further than the yard, and the interested parties found it almost impossible to edge their way

into their places. John Clingman and Helen Hungerford looked equally nervous and anxious. The calmness which she so easily maintained through the worst evidence of the previous day, had left her, and her face was flushed and pale by turns. Mrs. Hungerford maintained the same dignified air that had been the characteristic of her life, a dignity softened and made beautiful by the kind eye and sweet expression of countenance. Mr. Stanvelt was an interested spectator, looking the throng over as if he was studying western manners and personal peculiarities for the first time. And in turn he was himself the object of many glances, for he was a man to attract observation anywhere. He was also understood to be an admiring friend of Helen, even if he was a witness against her side of the case.

With the opening of court the defense at once began its testimony, Clingman's partner conducting the examination of the witnesses. An hour was spent in proving various matters connected with the purchase of the property by Hunter and his sale to Colonel Hungerford. Then the bailiff was directed to call Thomas J. Dorset to the stand. When this name was called, there was a thrill of excitement in the court room. The spectators rose in their seats, and the people in the yard pressed up to the open windows. The attorneys, the sheriff

and deputies looked eagerly around the room. Judge Barrier started as if struck, pressed his way through the throng to the little ice water tank, gulped down a glass of water and disappeared through the door.

The witness came forward, a neatly dressed old man, his long white hair so smoothly combed as to give him a somewhat venerable appearance. The keen, bright eye denoted a vigor of mind quite beyond that of the poor, stooped body. And altogether he seemed to be a man who had himself well in hand.

After he had taken his seat it was some minutes before order could be sufficiently restored for his testimony. John Clingman arose and began the examination. Having asked him his name and other preliminary questions, he said to him:

"Mr. Dorset, will you tell this jury all you know about this case, as briefly and clearly as you can, and give all the facts?"

"In 1846," he said, "Levi Barney and myself came to Millersburg under the assumed names of Steadman and Woodrow, and as the agents of eastern land owners. We spent some days in looking up lands belonging to non-residents, and then made a contract with Hunter to sell him section nine, and one-half of section fifteen, in Coal Creek Township, of which John Thomas Jones was the owner.

We represented to Hunter that we were agents for Jones and showed him letters from Jones authorizing us to sell the lands, but these letters were not written by Jones. We were to have a month in which to send east for the deed, and complete the transaction. In due time the deed came. It was a forged deed."

"Forged by whom?"

"By a clerk in the office of Stanvelt Brothers, New York. We had accomplices in the East and here in the West, and he was the man through whom we worked the lands belonging to New York men."

"What was his name?"

"Cassidy. Edward Cassidy. Ned we called him."

"Go on with your evidence."

"When the deed came Hunter was not in town, and before his return we received a letter from Cassidy saying that if we had not yet given Hunter the deed, for heaven's sake not to do it. For the next day after he sent it, Jones himself came into the office and signed a deed to these lands to this same man Hunter, that the deed was acknowledged before William Stanvelt, notary, and he said that if we attempted to use the other deed the whole plot would be exposed, and we would all be caught."

There was a great stir in the court room when the witness made this statement. But in a moment the excited audience dropped into breathless silence, and all leaned forward to hear the calmly spoken words of the old man.

"Can you produce that letter," asked Clingman.

"Yes."

And the old man unfolded a small package which had been resting on his knee and handed the attorney a very old, yellow looking envelope. The letter was dated New York, July 7, 1846, and was signed by Edward Cassidy. The contents were as stated by the witness.

"We kept quiet," the witness continued, "and two days later Hunter returned. He told us that he had some reason to doubt our authority to sell the property, and had bought of another agent, and he demanded the return of his earnest money. The fact was, that the other agent gave him better terms. But we returned his money to keep things quiet. The deed to Hunter was put on record the same day."

"What did you do with the forged deed?"

"Barney took it."

"Would you know it if you saw it now?"

"I might. We put a mark on all our papers so that our accomplices would know them. Every man in the ring knew this mark."

The attorney then handed the witness the deed which was submitted the previous day. The old man wiped his glasses and looked it over carefully. "I do not see the marks, but my sight is not good. Will you look in the opposite corners of the paper and see whether there is a very small 'b' in the upper corner and an almost invisible capital 'D' in the lower corner?" Clingman took the paper and handed it to the clerk, who by direction of the court examined it and declared that the two letters as described were visible. He was then put on the stand and sworn, and testified to the presence of the letters. The interest became more intense.

"May it please your Honor," said the attorney, "this witness is an old man, and we should like to permit him to rest until after the noon recess. But it was agreed yesterday that we should be permitted to recall the plaintiff's witness, Shirley, before closing the case. We now ask to have him take the stand."

Shirley came forward in a dogged manner, but assumed a defiant attitude when the questioning began.

"Will you tell us again, Mr. Shirley," said Clingman in a gentle manner, "where you got that deed?"

Then Shirley told how he had traced the Hunters until at last he had found an heir in a southern

state and from him obtained the paper. But Clingman turned upon him his talent for cross-questioning, which had given him great reputation, and, before he was through, had made him contradict himself so palpably as to destroy the credibility of his testimony. After securing from him a complete admission of his acquaintance with Barney in New York, the shrewd lawyer stepped close up to him, looking him full in the face as he shrank down into his chair, and exclaimed:

"You got this deed from Barney? You took it for a gambling debt, didn't you?"

The witness turned crimson, gasped a feeble denial, and was dismissed. The effect on the jury was sufficiently evident, as they watched him leave the chair with ill-concealed contempt.

Court then adjourned for the noon recess, but the majority of the spectators refused to leave the room.

"Mrs. Hungerford has won the case," said an old neighbor. "That is," said another, "if the lawyer on the other side doesn't tear up Dorset on the cross-examination as Jack Clingman did Shirley."

Clingman was warmly congratulated, but there was a very anxious look on his face when he took his father into his private office and told him to be prepared for surprises, for he didn't know himself what might happen before they got through with the case.

CHAPTER XXIII.

STARTLING DEVELOPMENTS.

"You said, Mr. Dorset, that you had some western accomplices," began Clingman when he resumed the examination after the noon recess. "Did anybody assist you in your operations in this county?"

"Yes."

"One of the citizens?"

"Yes."

"Will you please to give us the name?"

The stillness which fell over the assembly as it waited for an answer to the question was death-like.

The old man paused, turned his eyes upward and seemed to be looking back through the years, scanning the faces of those who had long since passed before him, and calling their names again into memory. Then, after looking slowly and searchingly around the room, he turned toward the anxious face of the lawyer and said:

"He was a young lawyer. His name was Barrier—Augustus C. Barrier."

A cry of astonishment broke from the assembly.

Men rose from their seats, and the throng swayed back and forth. Clingman dropped back into his chair, and the other attorneys sat speechless.

Judge Barrier had been a prominent figure in Millersburg for more than thirty-three years. He had come there a stranger, but had marked talent, and rose rapidly in his profession, was elected state's attorney, and afterward judge of the circuit court to fill an unexpired term. His practice was large, and he had become one of the wealthiest men in the county. But he had long been regarded as wanting in strict integrity, as somewhat unscrupulous in his profession, a shrewd and conscienceless schemer in politics. His war on Congressman Clingman, begun soon after the latter's first nomination, as we have seen, became very bitter and had greatly estranged the congressman's friends.

But the sudden revelation of the old witness fell like a thunderbolt in an open day. Whatever the men who lived in Millersburg thirty years back might have suspected at the time, now most of them had moved out of the county or gone to their graves. And the whole scene seemed to those present like a coming to the day of judgment.

When the spectators had recovered from their first shock, all eyes were turned in search of Judge Barrier. But he had not been in the court room since Dorset took the witness stand. And he was never there again.

"We are through with this witness, for the present," said Clingman.

The cross-examination was severe and determined. The plaintiff's attorney was a man of equal skill and ability with the congressman, and he brought all his shrewdness and skill to bear on the attempt to destroy the evidence of the old man. But he held to his story in such a simple and straightforward manner as to strengthen the effect of his testimony.

At length the attorney paused, consulted with his associates for a few moments, then turned to the witness and with great deliberation said:

"Mr. Dorset, did your operations, as you call them, extend to any other lands owned in this county by John Thomas Jones of New York?"

"Yes, sir."

"What were they?"

The silence again became oppressive, while the witness looked through his bundle of papers.

"They were section eleven, and one-half of section fifteen, in Coal Creek Township."

Captain Clingman shuddered, and the anxious look in his son's face deepened. This was the home farm and the coal land of Captain Clingman.

"This evidence does not relate to the property in dispute," said the judge.

"That is true," said Clingman, "but will the court please let the witness go on? These parties are looking for stolen land, and we are willing that all the facts should come out."

"Go on then," said the court.

"How did you operate in this case?" said the attorney.

"We had this deed made out in the name of John Thomas Jones and signed by himself and wife, Elizabeth J. Jones, the name of the wife of the cousin, John Thomas Jones. Then the clerk in Stanvelt Brothers' office, on the day that Mr. Jones died, slipped the deeds to these two tracts out from among his papers, and this caused the confusion which has kept the matter of section eleven and the other half of section fifteen concealed all these years. The old deeds to the Hungerford lands were left among the papers, after they were sold, and the executors and heirs thought that these other lands had belonged to the cousin who owned numerous tracts in the West at one time. But he had sold them and gone back to Wales to live. We knew these facts fully, as we operated on a tract belonging to John Thomas Jones, in another county."

"Don't argue the case, Mr. Dorset, but tell us what else you did."

"We had the property deeded to a fictitious

name, Dobson, as it appears on the record, then to an accomplice under the name of Myers, an *alias*, and through Myers we sold the property to Captain Clingman for fifteen thousand dollars, I think it was. Barney and myself kept under cover in the matter and Myers was introduced to Captain Clingman by Barrier, who vouched for him, and showed him the stolen deeds and other papers."

"What made you pitch on Captain Clingman as a victim?" asked the attorney with a smile and a shy glance at the captain, who looked as if he would fall from his chair at any moment.

"We got on the track of him in the East, just after he received considerable money through his wife, and we tolled him out here to work this land off on him."

This last statement turned the situation, which had been so intensely tragical, into comedy for the moment. For if there was any one in the county who had a reputation for shrewdness and knowledge of men, it was Captain Clingman. The spectators laughed heartily, and the captain himself joined them. But the congressman looked serious, probably because he had a foreboding of the developments which were yet to come.

"Have you any of the papers used in these transactions here?"

"Yes."

And then the old man handed the attorney the deeds which had been stolen from the office of Stanvelt Brothers, and the forged deed by which the property had been conveyed from Jones to the first fictitious purchaser. The signature was afterwards proved, by comparison with the other papers, a forgery.

"Now," said the attorney, "did you ever reveal this fraudulent transaction to any one?"

"Yes."

"To whom?"

The witness hesitated.

"Answer the question," said the judge.

A troubled expression passed over the old man's face and he proceeded hesitatingly.

"It was to the detective who discovered our operations and ran us down. I made a bargain with him after our arrest to reveal all our fraudulent transactions on condition that he would help me to escape. We both kept our part of the agreement. I remember that he said on the night that he let me out of jail, that he was going to look this case up right away."

"Is he living now?"

"No, no, he is dead," said the witness with a shudder, and his head dropped upon his breast.

"Go on," said the attorney.

"A few weeks after my escape I landed in St.

Louis, and in the first paper that I picked up I saw that he had been murdered on a road near this place."

Then before the court could check him, and as if speaking to himself in melancholy reflection, he said:

"A man who has committed a crime will do almost anything to cover it up."

The spectators had by this time become prepared for astounding revelations. But the tension of feeling produced by this last statement was too great to bear, and it was with much relief that they saw the old man dismissed from the witness stand.

And thus closed this day of startling sensations.

When Judge Barrier was sought for he could not be found. But afterwards it was learned that immediately upon leaving the court room in the morning, he drew a large sum of money from the bank, was driven to a neighboring railroad station, and fled the country, never to return. The people settled down to the conviction that the mystery of the murder at the old oak tree was at last solved. They believed that Barrier, knowing that the detective was on his track and would have him arrested for his connection with the fraudulent transfer of the Jones lands, had waylaid him in the woods that night on his return from the farmer's, and had shot him from behind the tree.

But there was no way of proving his guilt, and no attempt was made to find him. Nor was the old witness prosecuted. His age and the important service which he had rendered in clearing up the case were deemed sufficient reasons for exempting him from prosecution. How much in this direction the prosecuting attorney had promised the young detective when telegraphing from the West, could only be surmised from the results.

That night Congressman Clingman and his father were in consultation with the plaintiff's attorneys long after midnight. "I believe the witness Dorset," said the congressman. "Colonel Hungerford's purchase was from the proper parties. But my father was victimized. There seems to be but one thing to do, and that is for you to withdraw your suit against the Hungerfords, and settle the case with us." A proposition of compromise between the Jones heirs and Captain Clingman was then made and accepted.

The next morning the suit was withdrawn, and thus the great case which had shaken the whole county was ended.

Sammy Suddendrop's reputation as a detective soared aloft, and he was the lion of the day. But Mrs. Hungerford told him that she wanted him to give up that kind of life, and help Helen with the growing business of the farm and mines. Sammy

said that he had no objection to dropping the profession, now that he had run Judge Barrier out of the country and got even with Captain Clingman for keeping Colonel Hungerford out of Congress. But he said he meant to be sheriff of the county, and that before long.

MR. STANVELT LINGERS AND CONGRESSMAN CLINGMAN HAS TROUBLE EXPLAINING.

Mr. Stanvelt did not return to New York at once, but accepted Mrs. Hungerford's invitation to stay another week. He said that he enjoyed the wideness of the western fields, the fresh air and the beautiful drives over the country roads, a remark that Sammy Suddendrop was still boyish enough to laugh at, for the weather was distressingly hot and dry and the roads filled with dust. He said that if Mr. Stanvelt wanted fresh air he would be off to Long Branch, but then it was nice to have such a fine New Yorker with them. They had had such a bad one in Shirley.

The fact was that Mr. Stanvelt had been rapidly changing his mind about Helen's being too ideal, and he told her so one day when they were returning from the coal mines. But he had not altered his opinion in regard to the difficulty of capturing such a prize. This, however, did not cool his desire to do so. The male heart does not work that

way. However, being a New Yorker, he was very cautious.

Mrs. Hungerford was charmed with him, but her secret preference for John Clingman made her watch with some concern Helen's regard for this man of culture, social qualities and strength of character. And he certainly was a man after Helen's own heart, a young elder now in one of the great New York churches, superintendent of a mission Sunday-school, and the right-hand man of a host of benevolent societies and enterprises. Mr. Stanvelt believed in using wealth and position for something more than selfish purposes.

But they parted as friends simply, and Helen's mind was soon burdened with another matter of serious interest.

The next day after Mr. Stanvelt's departure she asked Sammy Suddendrop, with some concern, what Shirley meant when he was so hard pressed in the cross-examination and replied in such a sneering manner to one of Mr. Clingman's questions. "He said that Mr. Clingman knew why he left Millersburg so suddenly when he was threatening to enter suit against my father four years ago. What did he mean by that, Sammy?"

"He meant just that, that Congressman Clingman did know. Didn't you notice how quickly John Clingman got away from that point?"

"Yes, there was something surprising about it. But I don't understand. What did he mean by it?"

"Shirley told me in New York," replied Sammy, after some hesitation, "that Captain Clingman paid him a thousand dollars to take Nellie Millbrook back to New York, and in a hurry. We met them that evening in the storm."

"And that was Shirley? But why was Captain Clingman so eager to get Nellie away?"

"I have not wanted to tell you this, but now that you have asked me, Shirley says that it was because the congressional convention was coming on, and Nellie could have spoken the word which would have ruined John Clingman's chances for nomination."

Helen turned very pale, and Sammy left her, lost in reflection. The developments of the trial had been painful to her, but this was a blow which struck to the heart.

When Mr. Clingman called again, she was so reserved that he asked her what was the matter. She replied:

"I have a question to ask you which is very trying to me.

"Why did your father pay Shirley a thousand dollars to take Nellie Millbrook back to New York?"

"That is a trying question, Miss Hungerford,"

he said after a painful silence, while the troubled look, which had not left his face since the trial, deepened. "I am afraid that I have no satisfactory answer to it. All I can say is this: Shirley went to my father with a story about Nellie Millbrook, and said Nellie was ready to back it up, and if they were not given a good round sum they would publish it and ruin my chances for Congress. Father said nothing to me about it, and I did not know it until after the nomination. But Judge Barrier advised him to pay the money and get them both away. At that time none of us knew the connection between Barrier and Shirley. But we know now that Shirley discovered something about Barrier's history through Barney, and that for years he has been kept silent by Barrier's money.

"Father decided to pay the money and get them away, because he said it made no difference how false their story was, a lie traveled faster than the truth in a political campaign, and it would upset all his hopes. You know how much he had his heart set on my going to Congress."

"Yes, I do," said Helen, a little severely. "Your father was willing to sacrifice too many other interests at that time."

"Afterwards," continued Mr. Clingman, "the fellow came back and tried to get some money out

of me, but I pitched him downstairs, and told him that I should send him to the penitentiary if he did not leave town."

"But he came back here the other day. However, Mr. Clingman, I do not wish to criticise you, for you have been so kind to us and so manly and straightforward in all this trouble that my admiration for you has been very great. But this has been a great shock to me, and you cannot blame me for hesitating to express full satisfaction with your explanation. For, as a lawyer, you know that paying hush money is a bad sign. It is hard to retrieve the situation after that."

"I know it, I know it. These wretched situations in which men find themselves in politics are hard for a man with a sense of honor to bear."

He spoke these words in a tone of deep anguish, and then looked into Helen's face longingly and pleadingly.

It was the first time that she had seen a look of grief and humiliation in the face of this man, who had hardly known anything in life but success and applause. His keen sense of the position in which he had been placed appealed to her strongly. But she had found it hard to make it all seem clear, and she returned his appealing gaze with a look that had more of distress than confidence or affection in it.

"Nellie Millbrook's mother," she said, "has just died of a broken heart. It was a sad tragedy and a great wrong. The man whose name is connected with it cannot be connected with mine. I must have more light on this matter, Mr. Clingman."

"Miss Hungerford, I cannot blame you. But I have said all that I can say. Good-night."

And in a moment he was gone.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A YOUNG WIFE'S SORROW.

THERE are times when whole families have their individual sorrows. Captain Clingman called the year of the trial the time of his visitation. He was a much humbler man afterwards, and dropped all political scheming. John Clingman returned to Washington thinking it the worst summer he had ever passed through. More bitter still was the year to Mrs. Mildred Norwin.

When married but little more than two years, she awoke to the most dismal and dreadful realization that ever smites the heart of a woman—that she was the wife of a drunkard. She had struggled hard to believe that when Lindell saw that his intemperate habits were undoing him, he would assert his manhood and reform. But like most men who yield to drink, he could not be made to see danger approaching, or measure the evil of disaster when it came. He lost his fine position and salary, but kept right on drinking. Picking up occasional assignments here and there, he earned something, but even this little did not reach his home, and

Mildred found herself absolutely without support. To write to her parents for help was a recourse which she refused to consider for a moment. What would they think? and why pain and humiliate them with the knowledge of her husband's disgrace, when perhaps he might soon reform and all be well again?

But something must be done, and she set herself bravely to do it. She moved again into cheaper quarters. Then she turned to that resort of millions of impoverished women, the needle. With her talent and skill and fine taste, she soon began to support herself at dress-making. But when August came her little child, now a year old, was taken sick, and when it had recovered her strength was exhausted, and the loss of time and expense had taken all her means.

Once more she was compelled to seek a cheaper place, and this time in poor little rooms in a rear tenement. For in a great city like New York human beings are dashed about by the changing tide of their affairs like drift on the swollen waters of a rushing river. Those who are stranded only too often find themselves in strange, dark corners, which are to them little better than living graves, and to which, when playing in the bright fields in childhood, they could never have thought it possible that they would come.

As Mildred looked around her dark and dismal quarters and thought of the beautiful grounds and fields around her western home, of the abundance that filled the house, of the mother looking cheerily across the table, of the happy sisters springing into the carriage and laughingly driving away, of her honored brother applauded by the multitude, and of her dearest friend, the companion of her childhood and her travels, in her abounding prosperity and happiness; it seemed that her poor heart would break. But she must live for her sweet little daughter's sake, for duty's sake. And again she resolutely set herself to toil. But her strength was failing, and sickness came. She pleaded with Lindell when he was at home and prayed for him when he was gone. But he was in the grip of the demon of drink, and in this age of the world there is no worse grip than that. He was still kind, if such a word can be used of a man who impoverishes his home by drink. He seemed to love her more than ever, and to cling to her, but he loved strong drink and clung to it, and that ruined all.

When Christmas came it was joyless. Mildred had now begun to dispose of her jewelry and the beautiful dresses with which she began her married life. They brought little, but with that little she fought the battle against hunger and want until the end of this supply was at hand. As the third

anniversary of her marriage day approached she struggled long and hard with Lindell to reform. Deep into the night she pleaded with him, clinging to him on her knees and asking God to help him. He promised her that he would let the accursed thing alone. But the next night he did not return, and the next he came home intoxicated. She looked at him as he lay across the bed in his drunken sleep, at the handsome face and fine forehead, at the thin lips that had so often spoken the brilliant words that charmed the social circle, and she loved and pitied him. Then she looked at her sleeping babe, its little face fast losing its cherub-like beauty and becoming pinched and blue with want. And her thoughts strove with one another. "I could die with him," she said, "but I must not let the child die."

Suffocated by the sense of her great trial, she threw up the little window to catch a breath of fresh air. A steamship was coming up the river from the sea, and she thought of that last night of the voyage when she gave her heart to Lindell, and of the strange misgivings which came over her as she heard the whistles sounding in the fog, and the booming of the cannon far off in the night.

"I know it now," she said, "they were sounding the alarm for me. My poor little ship was sailing toward a rock."

After walking the floor a long time she said: "All must not be lost. My pride must bend, and I must take the last dreaded step in humiliation."

She sank down upon the bed beside her husband, and slept until morning. Then she told Lindell that she was going home to her father. He looked terror-stricken, but there was no strength or hope for her in his pleading voice. As he passed out of the door he turned and looked lovingly and beseechingly at her and said: "Mildred, darling, I shall soon be a better man."

In an hour more Mildred was looking her scant possessions over for something to sell or pawn for money to purchase her railroad ticket. There was but one thing left, a beautiful and costly jewel which Helen had sent her from Paris as a wedding present. She had clung to it tenaciously through all her want. But with a heartbroken sob she took it up and passed out of the door.

At noon she wrote a note—on which the tears fell—for Lindell, and laid it upon the table; and taking her child in her arms, went down the old and soiled stairway. When the shadows of evening came, and Lindell was again groping slowly up this stairway, Mildred was far out of the city, on her way to her father's home.

As the train approached Millersburg the next night, the troubled young mother drew her child

closer to her breast, dropped her veil over her face, and strove hard to keep back the tears.

"It is the anniversary of our wedding day," she said to herself. "How awful the contrast from that night when I went away the happiest of brides!"

It was half-past ten when the train stopped, and there was no one on the platform to recognize her. After some hesitation and grumbling, a hackman consented to take her out to Captain Clingman's. She gave him her last money, and took the seat behind him. "It is a dark and bad night to go so far at this late hour," said the man. "You will need to wrap the child up well." But already the little thing was tucked away in more wraps than the loving young mother could well spare from herself.

When they came near the Hungerford home, Mildred saw the light still streaming from Helen's window. For she was intending to start for New York the next day, and her preparations had kept her up later than usual.

"Oh, that happy girl!" thought Mildred; "what would she think if she knew who was passing, and why?" And she sobbed convulsively. The man spoke to her and said their dismal drive would soon be over. But as they came opposite the gate through which Mildred had so often passed, to

go tripping up the walk and fly into Helen's arms, the flood of past recollections was more than she could bear, and she swooned and fell forward. The driver tried to arouse her, but becoming greatly alarmed he called to the house for assistance. Helen heard his call, threw a shawl over her head and hurried down to the gate.

"I have a woman here," he said, "a stranger whom I was taking out to Captain Clingman's and she fainted."

"Lift her out quickly," said Helen. "Bring her into the house."

"There is a little child too."

"Let me take it, and you carry her."

And Helen took the precious little burden in her arms and ran up the walk, while the man came after, bearing Mildred. He laid her down in the hall under the dim light. Helen hurriedly brought a glass of water, drew back the veil, looked into the face and uttered a cry of agony. The man caught the glass from her trembling hand and sprinkled the water over the white face. Mildred opened her eyes, gazed about in a bewildered manner, and closed them again. Mrs. Hungerford now appeared, and they carried her to Helen's room and placed her on the bed. When she became conscious and a look of recognition passed over her face, Helen bent over her and smothered her with kisses, while the tears dropped upon her face.

When the man was leaving, Helen, who knew him as a trusty, reticent man, handed him a bank note, saying: "This is something extra for your trouble. But you are not to breathe a word of what has happened to-night to anybody."

It was some days before Mildred was able to leave her bed. But Helen or her mother watched at her side constantly, and they were hardly willing to leave the pretty child out of their arms.

While these days went by, Mildred told them all. "It is an awful blight to fall so soon on one's young wifehood," she said.

But hope was not yet dead in her heart, and with yearning she still looked toward the future. She had pleaded that no word might be sent to her home, and she shrank from this last step as the greatest trial of all.

At the end of a week Helen told her of her deferred trip to New York, that she was going for a double business purpose, to investigate a purchase of some important mining machinery, and to look into a scheme which Mr. Stanvelt had suggested to her for bringing out some families in the city to the farm and the mines. She was also to enjoy a visit with her aunt, who had returned from Paris.

"You will try to see Lindell, won't you?" said Mildred. "Perhaps you can say the word that will help to bring him back to himself, and I shall

pray. It is very hard for me to think of your seeing our wretched home, but that is where you may find him."

When Helen left for New York it was agreed that no word was to be spoken of Mildred's presence in their house until her return.

CHAPTER XXV.

SAVING A MAN FROM THE DEVIL.

IT was just two weeks after the day on which Mildred left the note on her table—a note sweet and kind, but one which scorched Lindell Norwin's heart and conscience like fire—that a carriage stopped in front of a long row of tenement houses on West Thirty-fifth Street, New York. Helen Hungerford alighted, and passing through the narrow little passage, ascended the stairway of the rear tenement. Stopping at a back door on the top floor, she knocked. It was ten o'clock in the morning, but Lindell Norwin was still at home, mostly because he had nothing to do, but partly because it had been the home of his wife and child, and he still clung to the hope that she might change her mind and come back to him.

He was sober, but not looking much like the Lindell Norwin of former days. His embarrassment was so great that he did not take the hand which was held out to him, but dropped back into a chair, and left Helen standing in the door. She made no delay in delivering her message to him,

and it was a message to his manhood, his heart, his conscience, and his religious convictions. For she felt that she had come to him armed like an old prophet, with all their past associations to give entrance, point and power to her words.

"You would better have been killed on the battlefield with Elwood," she said, "or died at Rome. You were spared, but surely not to sacrifice a beautiful wife and child and your own manhood and everything on the altar of drink. Your mother loved you with a great love, and your father toiled in heat and cold to educate you, and you reward them with shame. Friends gathered around you, friends good and true, and cheered you and blessed you, and you have turned your back upon them for the wretched, drunken companions of the bar-room. Oh, the shame, the wickedness, and the meanness of it!"

Lindell Norwin never before heard Helen speak except in soft and gentle tones, and her words terrified him. He shrank from her flashing eyes, and sank low in his chair.

Then she changed her voice into a more pitying tone and said:

"The prodigal son came to himself. You are not yourself now. Your real self was the Lindell Norwin whom everybody loved at school, who stood like a hero in the shock of battle, who was

the pride of his profession a few years ago. Come back to that self, Lindell, come back."

Her voice choked with sobs, and the tears started down his cheeks.

"Miss Hungerford, I have tried hard to come back since Mildred went away. I did not know before that any human being could suffer such agony of heart as I suffered when I read her note. I looked around this miserable room, and the loneliness was awful. When she was here it seemed beautiful in spite of its poverty, but now it is like death and yet I cannot bear to leave it. She could not stay. It was right for her to go. But, oh, my God, if I could let this cursed drink alone! Every morning I have said I would, and every night I have come home drunk.

"I got out the Bible that mother gave me, for I threw away her doctrines, but not her Bible. I could not do that, because it was her gift. And I read some of the passages which she had marked, but they only made me feel worse, and here I am—a drunkard. That is the awful truth." His frame shook convulsively, and he sobbed like a child.

Helen took the Bible and turned to a verse which his mother had marked. It said: "Wheresoever the devil taketh him, it teareth him."

"Wherever he takes you," she said "he tears you. He has done nothing but tear you ever

since he got his satanic grip on you. He has torn you in your home; he has torn you in your profession; he has torn you from your friends; he has torn the beauty of your manhood and your loyalty as a husband; he has torn all the joy out of your life, and is tearing all the hope out of your heart.

"But listen, Lindell; Christ called this young man to him and 'as he was yet coming,' it says, 'the devil threw him down.' But that was the devil's last throw. If you will come to that same Christ, the devil can never throw you down again. You will come, won't you, Lindell?"

Her earnestness took hold upon him like the voice of God. He clasped his hands hard, and beads of perspiration stood upon his forehead. Every man has his hour of supreme choice. This was Lindell Norwin's hour of destiny, of lasting shame, or of hope and honor, of the right hand or the left at the throne. He arose and said:

"I will come to that Christ. Pray for me as Mildred prayed." They dropped upon their knees and prayed together.

When they arose there was a manly look in his face. Lindell Norwin had come to himself. He never left himself again, but was a man from that hour. A month later he was rejoicing with his wife and child in a new home, and their happiness and prosperity greatened with the years. Mildred's

sorrowful journey was a secret which remained locked in the hearts of those who loved her.

On the Sunday which followed this interview Helen accepted an invitation from Mr. Stanvelt to visit the mission Sunday-school of which he was superintendent. Having attended service in the morning at her aunt's fashionable church on the avenue, she now had an opportunity to study the religious aspects of the great city in sharp contrast. This was a congested district in which the families lived in tiers and children swarmed and multiplied in proportion to the poverty of the parents. For it is the way of the world that children increase or decrease in inverse proportion to the ability of the parents to provide for their wants. And similarly the provision made by the churches for the spiritual wants of the people runs the wrong way of proportion.

The effect of the contrast was painful to Helen, as it usually is to those who have not become too familiar with the ready explanations by which all such things are justified in an age determined to think well of itself.

"I presume," she said to Mr. Stanvelt, "that there is a reason for all this difference between rich and poor in church matters, why so much more should be done on the avenues where the people seem better than on the side streets where they seem worse."

"It is a matter that troubles me much," was the reply. "But churches seem like all other living organizations. It is the nature of everything that lives and grows to adapt itself to its environment, and to feed and enlarge itself on what surrounds it. The church, so far as it follows a law of nature, slips into the way of building up itself. Its own growth, strength and importance become the object. It selects a good corner, very much as a business house does, preferring what it calls a good neighborhood, nice people, a good class of people, who will readily come to the services. If the neighborhood is fashionable the church becomes fashionable. If the good people move out of the neighborhood and go up-town, the church sighs a little, wrings its hands a little, and then follows them. In a word, the church finds itself in the grip of a law of organic life, and laws are hard things to struggle against. All organization builds for itself."

"But the gospel is not of law, but of grace. Perhaps the church needs more grace."

"No doubt of that. But the reign of grace has not yet set in, that is largely. It is a nice sounding word, but when you come to put it on and try to wear it every day in this fierce competition and mad rush of a great city, it cramps the limbs and hinders the pace. But our church does try to do something more than live for itself. It has had this

mission for years, and has spent a good deal of money on it."

"But how much love has it spent on it? I beg your pardon, but it is so much easier for rich people to give away money than heart to the poor. If every dollar's worth of bread that has been given had meant a dollar's worth of heart, wouldn't the world be better to-day? I have found in the little good that I have tried to do, that in charity the only money worth a hundred cents on the dollar is that which is minted in the heart."

"I knew that you had something which makes your work more successful than mine."

"Oh, no, I am delighted with your great school, and I have been wishing that I had such hundreds of boys and girls, and all these masses of people around me. It would be the joy of my life to have such a field as this to work in."

And Helen turned with smiling enthusiasm towards Mr. Stanvelt.

He looked at her so earnestly and searchingly that she was saved from blushing confusion only by the interruption of the secretary, who reminded the superintendent that it was time to close the lesson hour. She had a very embarrassing feeling that she had made a mistake. It would have been so easy for Helen Hungerford to become connected with that great field of labor.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HELEN HAS A GLIMPSE OF THE TWO-FOLD FACTOR.

SOMETIMES we get new and strange glimpses of ourselves when we are away from home. There is in the one self such a variety of selves—the inner self, the outer self, the better self, the worse self, the self at home, the self away from home, the self loved and the self condemned—that we need sometimes to take ourselves out of the long-time setting and survey all sides of our personality in a new light. Such a view shows us, at least, how much of us is mere environment and how much actual self for all places. We see, too, this real substance of our personality, not through our own eyes only, but through the eyes of the new multitude about us.

Helen Hungerford found herself passing through an experience of this kind before she had more than half finished her stay in New York. She had never been given to introspection, but had kept her eyes toward the world and its men and women, eager to know and interpret all. Her mother's life had been to her such a light on the way, the

first great principles of religious character had asserted themselves so readily and strongly, and her own thoughts and resolutions came to her so quickly, that she had never felt the need of searching herself to find out what she was, or of laboriously framing laws of self-government.

But now there was dawning upon her a new sense of herself. She was daily meeting new people, strong, well-poised, self-reliant people. Her aunt, who had a trifle too much worldly ambition, was fully alive to the advantages of a beautiful and brilliant niece, and kept her in a round of social functions and in constant contact with a splendid company of friends. But it was Mr. Stanvelt's earnest attention that most awakened the new sense of self. She realized, as never before, her womanhood. Not even when John Clingman stood looking imploringly into her face did she have such a vivid sense of the fact that woman cannot reckon with herself alone, that she has to take man into the account. And this does not mean man in the abstract, but a man. Here was a man of splendid type, with ideas of life much like her own, a man established in principle, in his social relations and habits, in business, home and friends. And there is something very substantial in the prospect of house and home presented by such a man and such a wealthy and well-recognized family as the Stanvelts. This

would be no putting to sea in an uncertain craft. At the same time she knew what his feelings toward her were. The look which so much confused her on the Sunday afternoon was not one which she cared to analyze, but one which she let stand for what it meant to her woman's instinct. She knew that it was a time for the bottom wisdom of her woman's heart.

But Helen Hungerford felt a conflicting emotion. She realized that during her stay in New York she had been almost constantly looking for a face. On Broadway, that greatest highway of human feet in the world, along which passes the longest daily procession, she glanced into the thousands of strange faces, but not to see the one she sought.

LOOKING FOR A LOST FACE.

"Helen, you always seem to be looking for somebody," said her aunt one day.

"I know it," was the reply, "and I hope that I shall find her."

She said nothing more, but as they were passing down the street the next day in a carriage, she uttered a little cry of surprise, and called to the driver to stop at the curb. Before her aunt had time to catch her breath Helen threw open the door and sprang to the walk. But the throng was great,

and before she could reach the young woman she was gone. It was Nellie Millbrook, the one person whom Helen Hungerford wanted most of all to meet.

With her new introspection she had come to feel that she ought to be sure of her ground with John Clingman. If it was not for her to lift the shadow which his father's action had thrown over him, yet it was not a recognized principle that a man must prove his own innocence. More than once she had tossed her head, and said to herself that it did not matter whether it was cleared up or not, that they could get along very well as neighbors without any explanation. But she had found that this was one of the things which could not be dismissed with a toss of her head. For she realized now, for the first time, that she was not fully master of herself. Her next determination was to settle her doubts, and to do this Nellie Millbrook was necessary.

Helen's disappointment, therefore, was great, when the one for whom she had been looking was lost to view. The days passed and the time for her departure was drawing near. She felt reluctant to go without settling the doubt which so much disturbed her.

"I must find her, if possible," she said, "and it does seem possible. It may be, it ought to be, that

Nellie's early training will have some influence and bring her to some of these rescue homes."

The next morning she took a carriage, without telling her aunt her object, and spent the day in visiting homes and missions, and making inquiries among missionary visitors. In the evening she returned weary and disappointed. But there was one little clue to which she attached a kind of forlorn hope.

After dinner she ordered a carriage again, and visited the mission which had given her the little hope. Taking her place near the door, she eagerly scanned the face of each woman who entered. But the face which she wanted to see did not appear.

Shortly after breakfast the next morning a lady from the mission called. She said she had been sent by a woman who wanted to see her, and who might be the person for whom she was looking. "She began to come to our mission last summer," said the visitor. "It was reported that she had just heard of the death of her mother, and she seemed much affected. She has come occasionally ever since. But we have never been able to prevail upon her to speak of herself or to take any decided step. We do not even know her name."

"Will you take me to her?" said Helen, rising.

"I cannot, but with your permission, she will visit you this afternoon."

In the afternoon Nellie Millbrook came, not the pretty school-girl who once twined roses in little Helen Hungerford's hair, but a wrecked woman whose life had been hidden from her friends.

Helen could not conceal her emotion, as she greeted her old schoolmate and led her to a chair.

"I have struggled hard with myself," she said, in a voice that had lost all its music, and was hard and cold, "to keep away from you. For while I wanted to see you and speak to you, pride and shame still had some hold on me. I knew you wanted to see me, for it was so like your kindness of heart, and I saw you spring from the carriage that day, but I hurried on. Last night I saw you at the mission, through the door, but when I recognize you I went away. I could not meet you there.

"I think I know why you want to see me. For I have heard some cruel things. They have called me an adventuress, but I never was. I have been cruel only to myself. No money was paid to me to leave Millersburg. It all went to that bad man, who has done so many wrong things, and added so much to my trouble.

"I went back to the old neighborhood, because they told me my mother wanted to see me. I sat on the little bench in the woods, where you used to see me sit, and waited in the night for a message to come from my mother. But it did not come,

and I cried bitterly. When it was too late I learned that they had deceived me, and mother knew nothing about it, or about my waiting for her. There was a double plot, to get money for Shirley, and some political scheme, what, I do not know."

"But tell me," said Helen with increasing emotion, "was there any one there who needed to be afraid of what you could tell of the past?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

It was with agonizing suspense that Helen awaited the answer to this question.

"That is a question that I have never answered."

"Answer it now, Nellie, for the sake of the little Helen whom you used to love."

"I love you now, Helen, as much as a heart like mine can love."

"Tell me then, tell me," she cried, clasping her hands.

"The man who went to his death with your father."

Helen sank back in her chair, covered her face with her hands and sobbed. A dark shadow had suddenly lifted from her heart. She saw it all, that Captain Clingman dreaded a revelation from which he could save his son only by letting it fall on the man who stood next to his son, and that man the one who had saved her father's life.

"Tell me of my mother," said the poor woman, when Helen had recovered her composure. "How I wanted to see her! Often in my dreams I went back to the old gate, looked across the flower-beds into my mother's face as she sat upon the portico, just as she used to do when I came from school. But when I tried to open the gate it was barred.

"And it has been so with all the gates of the past. They have all been barred. Oh, how often I have wished that I could unlock the gates of time and go back to my girlhood and have the right hand and the left before me again! But these fatal, awful steps! You have read of God's condemnation of sin in the Bible, you have heard the preacher picture His wrath against it, and you have seen its blight and curse on those around you, but you have never felt that curse in your own soul, the fierce agony of knowing that you yourself are the one whom it has destroyed. I have. A sorrowing woman can ease her grief with tears, but tears avail nothing for a lost woman."

"Please don't talk so, Nellie; you will break my heart. I love you still."

"It is just like the little Helen of old for you to say so. But it is too late for love. There is a great gulf between us. I have only one wish now, and that is to be laid beside my mother when I die, and that will be soon. Good-bye."

And she hurried away. They never met again, but Helen handed the pastor of the mission a check and told him that when Nellie Millbrook died, which could not be long hence, he should send the body back to its old home. Three months later a coffin was taken from the train at Millersburg, Helen and her mother and a few of the neighbors followed it to the cemetery, and the wanderer was laid at rest beside her mother. The grass grew over her grave, the rains and snows fall upon it, and the stars look down from the sky above as upon other graves, while the years roll into eternity and the revelation of all things approaches.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LITTLE RIFT WITHIN THE LUTE.

WITH the close of the session in March John Clingman retired from Congress. To the great disappointment of his friends, he had refused a renomination the previous autumn. In answer to their protests he said that he could not afford to stay in Congress when he could make four or five times as much in his profession.

"I shall take a vacation," he said, "until I am better able to support political honors. A man can't be honest and make money in politics, and I have not yet reached such a pitch of patriotism as to be willing to be poor all my life for the sake of supplying the farmers with garden seeds and patent reports, and of getting political appointments for the townspeople."

To his father he said, rather bitterly, that there were too many complications in politics, too many unfortunate situations in which a man felt that his honor was being rubbed off. His father connected these remarks with the fact that his resolution to retire from Congress was suddenly taken after

his interview with Helen Hungerford, and concluded quietly, but sorrowfully, that his own action in the past had something to do with it. He also noticed his son's change of tone respecting Helen. He seemed annoyed or replied testily when spoken to about her, and the family recognized that with John she had become a forbidden subject. During the winter there were rumors that he was to marry a rich senator's daughter, and his friends were disposed to accept the report as something more than mere rumor. They had also come to think it one of the strong probabilities of the future that Helen Hungerford would change her residence to New York.

After his return from Washington Mr. Clingman was busy with important cases in the supreme court, and was away from home much of the time.

The summer was passing, and he had not met Helen since their painful interview. When she wrote him, after seeing Nellie Millbrook, acknowledging the verification of his explanation, and assuring him of her confidence, he did not answer her letter, and the rift within the lute widened. They both became conscious that they were standing on opposite banks of a stream, which each was too spirited to attempt to bridge.

Thus matters stood when one day in August Mr. Clingman and his father were driving out home

together. As they turned a bend in the road the captain said:

"Jack, there comes the span of blacks. We are going to meet Miss Hungerford, and I want to speak to her about a little matter of business. Now don't brace yourself and act as stiff as a telegraph pole."

Helen was doing her own driving, and when the captain waved his hand she brought her horses to a stand. The captain's business seemed to his son rather trivial, and he had good reason to think that it was only a pretext for something else. But before he had time to reflect upon the matter, Helen said:

"I have been wishing to see you, Mr. Clingman. We want you to do us a favor. A man whose family we helped through the winter, and to whom we gave work in the spring, has been getting drunk and beating his wife. Half a dozen wives up and down Coal Creek have been beaten by their husbands this summer, and we mean to put a stop to it. Our ladies' league has taken up this matter, and it is our intention to see what virtue there is in the law. We want you to take hold of this case and put such a fright on these wife-beaters that there won't be any more of it."

"Where is the prosecuting attorney?"

"I do not know. Drawing his salary, I presume.

But if I can get you to promise your service, I know where you will be, and where that brutal fellow will be, when you get through with him."

"Thank you for your confidence. I take it as a compliment to a bachelor. You do not think that a married man would prosecute a wife-beater with much zeal, do you?"

Helen laughed and replied: "Ask your father; he is a married man."

"But I do not practice in a justice's court," said the lawyer.

"Of course not, being a statesman, and the pride of the bar," said Helen airily. "But waive all that in this case, for woman's sake."

"You women are peculiar," he replied. "If a man gets drunk and disciplines his wife a little, you all pounce down on him and want him pilloried. But if he had been a sober man, and killed his wife, you would have carried bouquets to his cell every day."

"And you lawyers would have tried to prove that black is white to save him. And your honorable judges on the supreme bench would have hunted law and precedents up hill and down in search of a little technicality or loophole to let him through."

"Perhaps we'd better put men off the bench and put women on,"

"If you do, women will be able to see a barn as well as the barn door. But you will help us, won't you?"

"If I do, and put a stop to wife-beating, your next woman's move will be to ask me to stop husbands from smoking."

Helen laughed so merrily over this remark that John Clingman felt its infection and relaxed enough to say that he would see about it. She knew what this meant in his case, and thanking him heartily, drove away.

"She grows more handsome every year," said the captain, as they passed on, "and more popular." But there was no reply. "Four years ago," continued the captain, "I could not have believed it possible for one young woman to have such an influence over the people of this county." But his son only looked away at the leaves of the corn curled up by the heat. "She has helped to organize a debating club or patriotic league or something in every schoolhouse." The captain looked in John's face again, but the latter refused to respond. "She has had a variety of titles," said the captain, with animation. "She has been called 'Girl Superintendent,' 'Coal Baroness,' 'Saint Helen,' 'Temperance Terror,' and now I wonder when she will be called a wife."

"It is warm, father," said John.

And the captain gave it up.

A BETTER BOND.

A few days after this conversation John Clingman said to his partner: "We must go out to Coal Creek this afternoon and take the deposition of a woman who is about to die. She is the most important witness in that big railroad damage case, and we must have her evidence before she is beyond the reach of a summons. It is to the interest of her own family too."

With a notary and a lawyer on the other side of the case, they were soon in a carriage and on the way to Coal Creek. At the grocery store on the corner Clingman asked the man who waited on customers when there were any, and sat in the shade the rest of the time, to point out the woman's residence. "She lives up there, where you see the buggy and black horses," he said. "That's how we know when somebody's sick out here. If the black horses stop to a house there's pretty apt to be somebody sick there. Miss Hungerford is always where she is needed."

"How long is she likely to stay?"

"Don't know; she was there all night last night and she came over again about an hour ago."

"We shall wait a while."

And the lawyers went down the hill to one of the mines. While they were gone Helen came out and told the boy to take the carriage home and

come back for her at 9 o'clock, and then went back into the house.

When the lawyers came up the hill, they saw that the carriage was gone, and went to the house. John Clingman was much embarrassed when he saw Helen at the woman's bedside fanning her. But his partner relieved the situation by stepping forward and explaining their mission to Helen, who had risen with a blush and a look of inquiry on her face. Then she put her arm under the poor woman's head and supported her while she briefly gave her testimony.

John Clingman glanced into Helen's face as he thanked her, and their eyes met. It was only for a moment. But when glances meet, moments sometimes mean years. The eye, which in an instant of time looks across the millions of miles that lie between us and the planets, may as quickly look up and down the thoughts and emotions of a human spirit.

When they were in the carriage again, his partner said to him:

"Clingman, I don't see why you and Miss Hungerford both needed to blush."

"We didn't need to, that is, she didn't; but when a half-dozen lawyers invade a dying woman's room, a little blushing embarrassment is becoming to them. I am not quite so much hardened as the rest of you."

"Perhaps not, but I was not so much hardened as not to wonder what her testimony about you would be in that higher court to which she is going."

"I know what her testimony will be about that young woman who was at her bedside," said the notary. "'I was sick and she visited me.'"

"You are right," said the partner. "And the Judge will say, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these.'"

Clingman was silent. But they could not tell whether he was weaving the woman's testimony into the case or was doing some serious reflecting. He was doing some serious reflecting.

There are times when the man who has been reared in the freedom of the fields and forests, longs to escape from the worry of business and the confusion of voices around him to the lonely places where the trees stand up in silence or the streams wind quietly down the valley.

It was in such a mood as this that John Clingman said to his partner the next morning, "I am going to the woods to-day to rest."

He drove down into the little forest which lay between his father's home and the coal mines, and passing into an unfrequented road, stopped at an inviting grass plat over which the branches of a neighboring tree threw their passing shade. He

dropped upon the grass, and under the spell of the music of softly rustling leaves and twittering birds was soon in deep musing over the past and himself. He had always gone forward like an engine which is on the track with its train attached, and whose master has nothing to do but pull the throttle and let it go. Onward and upward he had mounted at a speed which surprised himself more than it did his friends. To them he seemed to be born for hard work and high achievement. But now for the first time he was painfully wrestling with himself. There had come into his mind a nameless presence, thoughts that threw him into confusion, and he hardly knew where to reach for a solution, or for mastery.

In the midst of his reverie he heard the sound of a horse's hoofs. It was cantering toward him on the dim road. In a moment more it saw him, shied, and came to a full stop. Rising up, he saw Helen Hungerford's face turned toward him.

"Why, Mr. Clingman, is this you?" she exclaimed, while the color came and went in her face.

"Yes," he replied. "I came out here to-day to have a visit with myself, to get back to my boyhood."

"I am sorry that I disturbed you, but I took this road because it is shaded. Good-day."

"Oh, do not go," he exclaimed. "I think the stars must have sent you this way. This is the third time that I have met you within the last few days when I did not expect it."

"The stars should attend to their own duties and not plot the unexpected."

"They are doing well. But I have had a very bad opinion of myself since I met you yesterday."

"How unfortunate that you should have met me!"

"No, that is not it. But how unfortunate that I should be compelled to think so much worse of myself when I compare myself with you! There was a world of difference between your motive and mine for being in that dying woman's room."

"It was a little thing that I should be fanning a sick woman."

"But the little things are the greatest proofs of principle. 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these,' is the principle of the eternal judgment."

"But you were there on professional duty."

"I know that, but practicing a profession for success and money, and following principles through day and night, in sick rooms and parlors, whether there is criticism or applause, are two very different things."

"I see that I have an able lawyer on my side this

morning. I wish you had as good an attorney to speak for you."

"He could never explain away the evidence of yesterday afternoon that your theory and practice of life are immensely better than mine. It settled the matter with me. You have used your advantages for others and I have used mine for personal success. Call it altruism, old-fashioned religion or what not, or let men say what they will about miracles and prophecies, this doing good to the least speaks for itself. It stands against all contradictions, all scoffs and skepticism."

"But the miracles and the prophecies, angel visits and messages from heaven, are the garden in which the flower grows and blooms into beauty. The world cannot have the one without the other."

"I know it. I am not one of those who believe that you can build a temple on a puff of air. There is certainly as much connection between deep conviction and high character, as between the roots of a tree and its topmost branches. I know that your life is the fruit of the convictions in which you were cradled and to which you have so tenaciously clung."

"You overestimate me. But your ideal is right. What will the end be?"

"I shall try your theory."

Helen turned her eyes upon him as if searching

the depths of his soul. In his strong face was an expression of deep earnestness, and in his eyes was the old longing, pleading look. A tear glistened on her cheek. She brushed it away, and taking the bunch of roses from her waist selected a white rose and a red rose, handed them to him, and with a soft "good-bye" she rode on. He stood looking after her as she went down the road, a fact of which Helen was quite conscious. When she had disappeared he kissed the roses and said: "Do they mean that all differences are past?"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AS GOOD AS GOLD.

"YOUR aunt has given us a pressing invitation to pay her a long visit this fall," said Mrs. Hungerford as she laid down the morning mail. "She says that you made so many friends in New York last spring that your return would be greeted with enthusiasm by a large circle. She does not think that you can afford to bury yourself in a little western city."

"Aunt is very kind and complimentary, but I know what she wants. She is a great believer in family alliances."

"So she is. But you seem to be afraid to make an application of the remark."

"She is thinking what a fine stroke it would be to form an alliance with so wealthy and well-established a family as the Stanvelts."

"Well, she is very wise and motherly, even if rather worldly. Having made a great success in marriage herself, she is justified in thinking that she understands the important factors in such matters."

"Certainly. There is much in this matter that appeals to wisdom. It has given me some hard thinking."

"You have been quite meditative all summer, dear; couldn't you think your way through?"

"Almost, all but my heart."

"Almost! A woman's heart is the most of her."

"Well, my heart never responded when Mr. Stanvelt's name was mentioned, and I think I could live near him a long time without glancing up the road to see if he was coming."

"Can you say that of every one else?"

"You think me cold-hearted, mother," replied Helen evasively.

"You are something of a puzzle, Helen, even to your mother. However, I understand your theory."

"Yes, I have had my theories, but theories are like rivers, they must run into the ocean."

"And what is the ocean?"

"The boundless, shoreless, bottomless word which names even the Omnipresent and Eternal Being."

"I should not like to have you go to New York and leave your heart behind."

"You have never seen it around here when I was gone, have you?"

"No, darling, nor my own either, the last few years."

Helen put her white arms around her mother's neck and kissed her for the pretty compliment. Then she said:

"We must put some flowers in the parlor, for Mr. Clingman is coming this evening, and he is very fond of flowers."

While she said this she still kept her arms around her mother's neck and looked into her eyes.

As the mother gazed back into those eyes of wonderful depth and meaning, and saw the question there, she simply said:

"Follow your heart, my darling."

During the evening Mr. Clingman said to Helen:

"When you asked me to prosecute that wife-beater, did you have two motives? I did not doubt your sincerity. But human motives are often like opening flowers, petals within petals, and the heart of the fragrance, where?"

"Why do you ask such a question?" said Helen with an amused look.

"Because, to be entirely frank, I think since I met you in this parlor after your return from college, you have done a number of things to test me."

"Let us see, that was more than five years ago. Have you been keeping a notebook ever since? I should like to see it. I presume it reads something like this:

"Tuesday—Tested to-day by H. H. Asked to make a temperance speech.'

"‘Friday—Tested again by H. H. Asked to prosecute a wife-beater.’”

“Oh, that will do,” he exclaimed laughingly. “I withdraw the remark. It was not parliamentary anyhow.”

“You ought to feel complimented,” she went on, “when tests are applied. People who are hunting for gold mines make tests.”

“You struck rock that would not run much to the ton.”

“You have come through splendidly.”

“But what was the object of it all?”

“I wanted you to be as good as gold.”

When John Clingman was leaving, he kissed Helen Hungerford good-night.

The next morning Mrs. Hungerford looked lovingly into her daughter’s radiant face, drew her to her bosom, and said:

“I always wanted it to be so.”

THE END.

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